



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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**USAID assistance with food security has brought vital help to those threatened in the highlands of Guatemala.**

### OVERVIEW

U.S. foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean is designed to help governments respond to their citizens by promoting security, strengthening democracy, and creating widespread long-term economic growth. This policy has borne fruit in the emergence of democratic states, and improved social justice and economic competitiveness. Despite advances in these areas, many people continue to be denied access to opportunity. There is a rise in criminal activity and violence largely related to drug trafficking that impacts regional stability and security and sometimes spills over the U.S. border. Large segments of the population have yet to enjoy the full benefits of democracy and economic growth; they lack the jobs, health-care, education, and safety that are needed to improve their lives. The Western Hemisphere currently has some of the highest rates of income inequality in the world and 80 percent of its indigenous peoples live in abject poverty. Inadequate economic policies, coupled with weak institutions, continue to undermine delivery of critical public services and the growth of a robust private sector-led, broad-based growth. As a result, the ability of democratic governments to deliver services is being questioned in the region. Moreover, while many countries have improved their ability to compete in the international market, they often lag behind developing countries in other regions.

To address these challenges, the United States is working to consolidate and deepen democratic gains so that everyone not only has a voice in electing their leaders, but also has the opportunity to raise their standard of living and to determine their destiny. U.S. foreign assistance will continue to fight corruption, promote the rule of law, and create the kind of democratic and just governance necessary to ensure that economic opportunity is not limited to elites, but instead extends to all members of society.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is a U.S. Government agency implementing important foreign assistance programs throughout the region. The Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) oversees 16 bilateral missions, 4 regional programs, and Washington-based programs for Cuba. The overall total budget for FY09 is approximately \$963 million.

### USAID PRIORITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- Support for the Goals of the Summit of the Americas
- Economic and Social Opportunity
- Citizen Safety
- Effective Governance

#### Summit of the Americas

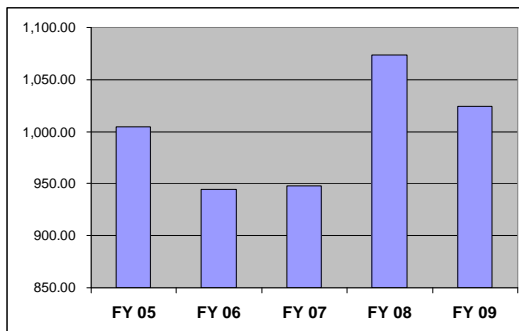
Programs support the goals of the Summit of the Americas to address the common challenges facing the people of the Americas in the areas of social inclusion and economic development through programs targeting at-risk youth in workforce development activities, investments in addressing adaptation to the impacts of climate change, addressing citizen safety and social justice programs, and support for the themes of the



# USAID LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

## USAID ASSISTANCE TO LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

(\$ IN MILLIONS)



Summit. These include improving competitiveness, facilitating credit flows, education, and issues relating to climate change.

### PROGRAMS

**Peace & Security (FY 09 \$213 Million):** Consistent with the goal of improving citizen safety and effective governance, Merida Mexico, Colombia, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and support for the Central America Regional Security Initiative are key components of our programs that reflect our goals of addressing social and economic opportunity. Programs will reinforce the links between security, economic prosperity, and strong democratic institutions. Efforts will reduce drug cultivation and trafficking, as well as provide alternative rural livelihood through licit crop development and increased market access.

**Governing Justly & Democratically (FY 09 \$187 Million):** Democracy programs focus on fostering greater political competition, less corruption, increase accountability, and better stewardship to state resources so that citizens may enjoy an improved quality of life. Programs strengthen judicial independence and capacity, internal controls, and effective prosecution of corruption. They also strengthen institutions of representative democracy, such as political parties, legislatures, executive agencies, media, and civil society.

**Economic Development (FY 09 \$266 Million):** Access to economic opportunity, and the social mobility that it creates, are fundamental components of social justice and promoting prosperity. The U.S. will work with governments to fight poverty in the region by facilitating access to the formal economy, implementing free trade agreements, and improving weak investment climates. U.S. assistance supports free market reform, transparency, and regulatory and legal environments conducive to expanding the domestic private sector and generating employment. The U.S. will work to strengthen institutional capacities to reinforce labor rights, reduce corruption, and improve the overall environment for investment.

**Investing In People and Humanitarian Assistance (FY 09 \$358 Million):** U.S. assistance in LAC contributes to meeting global challenges in climate change by supporting greenhouse gas emissions reduction and carbon sequestration efforts, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas. Improvement of food security will be enhanced in five focus countries: Haiti, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The USAID focus on humanitarian assistance helps nations prepare for and respond to natural disasters and potential pandemics. Initiatives work to increase capabilities



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to respond quickly and comprehensively to crisis through enhanced communications between disaster emergency authorities.

Health programs target poor and vulnerable population, with a particular focus on maternal and child health. Health programs improve quality and access through improved systems and infectious disease prevention. A special emphasis is placed on tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

U.S. assistance in LAC is committed to unlocking people's potential—especially women and marginalized communities by helping to improve education. Education programs expand access to quality education and provide training opportunities to strengthen employability for at-risk youth and disadvantaged populations.