



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## BARBADOS AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN

# U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PERFORMANCE PUBLICATION Fiscal Year 2009

### FY 2009 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE GOALS

Embassy Bridgetown is responsible for relations with seven countries and a number of overseas territories that comprise an island archipelago spanning several hundred miles and forming a large part of America's vulnerable "Third Border." The Mission remains committed to the thoughtful, creative, and responsible use of foreign assistance funds. This Performance Publication outlines the successes in using these assistance resources in FY 2009 to pursue U.S. national interests in this diverse region.

Although the United States and the island nations in this region share a commitment to democracy and a desire to achieve common international objectives – such as combating terrorism, ensuring citizen safety, and promoting energy security – the relationship with the countries of the Eastern Caribbean has in recent years been weakened due to the perception that the United States is no longer as deeply engaged in and committed to the region. The ever-expanding engagement and largesse of Venezuela, China, Cuba, and, most recently, Iran, have created a more complex and competitive diplomatic environment for the United States. Embassy Bridgetown has sought every opportunity to reinforce the trust and confidence underlying the relationship with the United States, reestablish the view of the United States as the region's partner of choice, and re-energize the partnership to meet the critical issues facing the region and the hemisphere. In FY 2009, the beginning of a turnaround in the region's attitude to the United States, which can be directly linked to proactive measures taken by the Obama Administration to engage the region's political leadership, was highlighted by the April 2009 Fifth Summit of the Americas.

Despite having a strong tradition of parliamentary democratic government and a substantial record of effective rule of law, the Eastern Caribbean region is characterized by wide disparities in per capita Gross Domestic Product among its nations and by troubling and increasing income inequalities within each society. If allowed to persist indefinitely, both factors can threaten social stability within the region. During FY 2009, the global economic downturn hit these small island economies hard, widening inter-regional and intra-national income disparities. These are inherently weak economies, with limited internal markets and global competitive disadvantages that face continual threats of potential natural disasters from hurricanes, flooding, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Each nation faces serious challenges that cut across the five priority objectives of the

foreign assistance framework. On top of the fragility of the economies, the insidious presence of transnational crime centered on narcotics trafficking represents a growing menace and threat to prosperity and security. If allowed to burrow into societies already weakened by stagnant economic progress and social lesions, this crime and violence will pose grievous threats to these small states' abilities to enforce the law, protect their citizens, and resist the corrosive effects on their civil institutions.

The United States Government's (USG) assistance programs are designed to address what Embassy Bridgetown and its Eastern Caribbean counterparts perceive as the most critical threats to regional stability and prosperity. In all its programs, the USG seeks to strengthen local and regional capacity to work toward sustainability. Each program element is designed to help national governments and regional authorities "build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people" by strengthening the capacity of institutions, building the economic and social fabric of the region, and making them more resilient to threats over time.

## **HIGHLIGHTS BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE**

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### **Peace and Security**

Embassy Bridgetown achieved significant progress in meeting its Peace and Security objectives this year. The primary focus has been to provide specialized training and technical assistance to counterpart countries to improve the capacity of local law enforcement to conduct counterterrorism and counternarcotics operations. This year, Embassy Bridgetown offered successful training across a range of key topics related to these twin security themes. The reinstatement of Foreign Military Financing funding permitted the restoration of the U.S. Coast Guard's Technical Assistance Field team, which is critical to support counterpart nations' aging Coast Guard vessels. Embassy Bridgetown also welcomed the restoration of training funds for the Regional Security System, the foundation of the Eastern Caribbean's own joint security apparatus.

Host-country security services participated fully and enthusiastically in a range of security-related training opportunities for front-line police and security officers, all intended to strengthen counterpart countries' institutional and personnel capacity to deal with possible terrorism threats. Heightened cooperation between the USG and local law enforcement resulted in the seizure of more than 103,000 kg of illicit narcotics, and approximately \$0.5 million in currency from drug traffickers. Regional capacity to interdict trafficked drugs is hampered by the lack of physical assets, including vetted maritime units. The Advance Passenger Information System program continued its highly successful operations as well, allowing local law enforcement and USG agencies to identify and apprehend a number of American fugitives, and to identify and track individuals with possible ties to terrorism.

The year saw important advances in the region's ability to counter transnational crime through the region-wide signing of eTrace agreements with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; and through the establishment – with funding from the Department of State's Diplomatic Service Anti-Terrorism Assistance program – of a new regional cyber-forensics laboratory in Antigua.

Embassy Bridgetown has been fully engaged with the Department of State and other U.S. agencies in the development of the new Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). Designed to attack a combustible mixture of inter-linked crime, trafficking, and justice issues, CBSI will generate complementary interagency programming involving a host of national and regional law enforcement and social service counterparts. Embassy Bridgetown sees tremendous promise in CBSI, not only to

increase funding in areas of particular criticality, such as justice sector reform, youth crime prevention, and regional law enforcement coordination; but of equal importance, to foster an integrated, balanced approach to citizen safety throughout the region.

### **Economic Growth**

Programs to promote Economic Growth began a strategic shift during the year, as one generation of projects reached its planned conclusion, and new programming was designed and initiated.

Assisting the region and its individual nations achieve and maintain economic growth remains the core goal, but Embassy Bridgetown has begun to focus on issues related to the region's youth – particularly, their readiness to join the workforce and their vulnerability to crime and violence. USG programs to help several Eastern Caribbean nations improve the climate for domestic and foreign business investment were successfully concluded, and a new partnership with the World Bank was formed, allowing it to continue to provide expert technical advice to counterpart countries on this theme as programming scaled down. The USG also brought to conclusion two long-running projects to support the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) with regional legislative drafting (through the Caribbean Legislative Drafting Facility) and with international trade negotiations (through the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery, or CRNM). The two processes directly support the region's efforts to counter the challenges of globalization and adhere to the international and bilateral trade agreements with which the region must comply or face consequences of reduced competitiveness and reduced revenue flows. Direct support to the CRNM coincided with the signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States and the European Commission. This complex trade arrangement will guide the trade and investment dynamics between Europe and the Caribbean for the coming decades. The region is now beginning, albeit very slowly, the implementation phase of the EPA.

After extensive technical analysis and consultation with regional partners and other donor organizations, the USG has initiated new activities directly addressing Caribbean youth – a challenge seen by governments across the region as one of the most vital to their future. Leaving school, often without sufficient academic or vocational skills, far too many young people are unemployed and vulnerable to being swept up in the riptide of crime, violence, and drugs. As the first step in new, multi-year programming, pilot youth workforce development projects began in FY 2009 in Grenada and Antigua, working with well-established local non-governmental organizations that have a positive track record of creating opportunities for young men and women.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to implement biodiversity conservation programs. Three biodiversity projects are now operating across the six member countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, developing rules and regulations to conserve fragile ecosystems and putting in place practical and effective management plans for several high-value protected areas, both terrestrial and marine. The most recent addition to USAID's biodiversity projects will introduce the resource management innovation of marine multiple-use zoning in St. Kitts and Nevis, from where this form of comprehensive planning will later be extended to the rest of the Eastern Caribbean. Notwithstanding the value of the individual biodiversity projects and the skill with which they are being implemented, the current constrained budget environment limits optimal program development and administration.

### **Investing in People**

Embassy Bridgetown's Investing in People program remains committed to working across the region with a multitude of partners to combat HIV/AIDS. This year saw a major and complex new HIV/AIDS initiative take form in the region, as the Department of State's Office of the Global

AIDS Coordinator designated the Caribbean region to receive new funding from the re-authorized President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to develop an interagency, multilateral "Caribbean Regional Partnership Framework" under the PEPFAR umbrella. Embassy Bridgetown, with its resident USAID Mission and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) office, was designated as the locus of programmatic and administrative efforts to design this ambitious new program. After several months of intense interagency analysis and discussion, complemented by extensive region-wide consultations with an array of Caribbean partners, Embassy Bridgetown orchestrated the signing by 12 Caribbean nations and regional bodies of the first regional Partnership Framework. This agreement commits both the U.S. Government and its Caribbean partners to a five-year set of objectives designed to put the region on the path of sustainable anti-HIV/AIDS efforts.

While Embassy Bridgetown devoted significant resources and personnel to design this complex new approach to HIV/AIDS assistance, its ongoing HIV/AIDS activities met with continued success. Working with CARICOM's Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against AIDS and with four national-level AIDS partners, effective regionally-integrated prevention and treatment policies were planned and implemented. USAID also continued working to strengthen regional HIV/AIDS training institutions and to develop further a regional epidemiology and surveillance center. USAID collaborates with programs run by the Department of Health and Human Services and the CDC in the design and implementation of support to these regional health authorities.

In 2009 the Presidential Initiative for teacher training, Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT), concluded, as direct USG funding through USAID ended. The success of this program, which was active in several Eastern Caribbean countries, most notably in Dominica, was such that participating nations and those new to the activity have committed their own national funds to continue and even expand the program. Not only has CETT made a significant contribution to one of the region's lurking threats to future prosperity and stability by giving its youngest citizens an educational jump-start, but it has also shown the ideal evolution in foreign assistance, graduating from external stimulus to internal institutionalization. The continuation by national governments of this straightforward but effective program offers one of the region's best means to prevent future problems with at-risk youth and crime – a modest investment early in education that will pay large dividends later.