



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean
Strategic Plan
FY2011-2015**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ART	Anti-Retroviral Therapy
CAREC	Caribbean Regional Epidemiology Centre
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community
CARSI	Central America Regional Security Initiative
CBSI	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
CBOs	Community-based organizations
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCJ	Caribbean Court of Justice
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CDF	Caribbean Development Fund
CERMES	The Center for Environmental Resources Management and Environmental Studies
CHAI	Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIMH	Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRSF	Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework 2008 – 2012
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CSME	Caricom Single Market and Economy
DFID	The British Department for International Development
DOS	Department of State
DOD	Department of Defense
ECCU	Eastern Caribbean Currency Union
EU	European Union
FBOs	Faith-based organizations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FRAMEWORK	The USG-Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework
GFATM	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HAPU	HIV/AIDS Project Unit of the OECS
HHS	Health and Human Services
HIS	Health information systems
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration
IFC	International Finance Corporation
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
MARPs	Most at-risk populations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSM	Men having sex with men
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS	The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OGAC	Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator
PAHO	The Pan American Health Organization
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS
PC	Peace Corps

PEHRBs	Persons Engaged in High Risk Behaviors
PEPFAR II	The United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PFIP	Partnership Framework Implementation Plan
PLHIV	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission
PPCR	Pilot Program for Climate Resilience
PwP	Prevention with people living with HIV and AIDS
ROP	Regional Operational Plan
S&D	Stigma and discrimination
SI	Strategic Information
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SPACC	Special Adaptation to Climate Change Project
STI	Sexually transmitted infections
SW	Sex worker
TA or TS	Technical assistance / Technical support
T&C	Testing and Counseling
TWG	Technical working group
USG	United States Government
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WB	World Bank
WHA	Western Hemisphere Affairs

PREFACE

Since the last time this USAID Mission prepared a strategy document to guide its development assistance program much has changed. First, USAID/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean has been restored as an independent “operating unit,” no longer a satellite office of a distant USAID mission and is now fully focused on and responsible for its program across a varied and complex set of cooperating countries. Second, the place of USAID in the U.S. Government’s galaxy of foreign affairs agencies had been altered, as has been the architecture of development assistance planning. And third, the role of development assistance, including its relation to the achievement of foreign policy goals and the genesis of assistance initiative, has evolved. Each of these changes in structure, role, and context has a direct bearing on this strategy document and indeed, on the strategy itself.

What do these changes mean for USAID/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean in preparing this strategy document? Simply put, the strategy development process and resulting paper is, one hopes, an intelligent and well-reasoned description of how U.S. foreign policy goals, policies, programs, earmarks, initiatives, and most of all, available funds, can be appropriately and prudently applied to the circumstances existing in the host countries. The new challenge for field Missions is to find the best means, opportunities, and partners with whom to work to achieve the goals inherent in available Congressional or Administration driven initiatives. In the pages that follow we describe what USAID/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean has determined to be the optimal package of activities that (1) respond to pressing needs of these societies; (2) will serve to further U.S. policy goals; and (3) prudently use programs and funds made available from our national government for development assistance

The new five-year strategy articulated in this document is based on a reflection of these important changes and reflects the new ways in which USAID does business, including how it develops its strategic vision and the programmatic realization of that vision. Specifically, each of the three components of this strategy is the product of thorough and lengthy interaction with USAID/Washington and certainly in the cases of HIV/AIDS and CBSI-related youth work, equally intense joint planning with the interagency. In a very real sense, the strategy and the programs intended to bring that strategy to life have already profited from Washington’s considerable input and stamp. Global Health and the LAC Bureau’s own health officers were deeply involved in every stage of the development of the Caribbean Regional Partnership Framework and in determining this USAID mission’s specific implementation role.

Similarly, LAC Bureau specialists have been highly active members of the Washington interagency team designing the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and members of our Mission have participated in many of the planning sessions for that project. As with the HIV/AIDS program, we have benefited from a sustained back-and-forth program planning process with both the Bureau and State’s Office of Western Hemisphere Affairs. The design of our youth development and employment program, which is enjoying a positive piloting and will be expanded by this strategy, grew from extensive consultation, interaction, and joint field assessments with both EGAT and the LAC Bureau. Lastly, the design of our climate change program has similarly benefited from excellent technical leadership from the LAC and EGAT Bureau climate change focal points, with the draft program description being written by the LAC Bureau specialist following intensive regional discussions with our Caribbean partners. Therefore, no element of this five-year strategy is something new, unknown, or unfamiliar to Washington, either USAID or the Department of State. Rather, the objectives and programs articulated in this document are the product of eighteen months of continuous dialogue, deliberation, and joint design.

I. OVERVIEW

1. Background

The United States and the countries of the Caribbean have a shared commitment to democracy and the rule of law and broadly consonant interests in combating drug trafficking, crime, and terrorism and promoting economic prosperity, free trade and energy security. This relationship has been challenged in recent years by a perception that the United States is no longer as deeply engaged in and committed to the region as in the past. The expanded presence and increasing largesse of Venezuela, China, Cuba and, most recently, Iran have created a more competitive diplomatic environment for the United States. Nevertheless, we have sought to counter potentially negative influences, restore the trust and confidence underlying our relationship, and re-energize our partnership to meet the critical issues facing the region and the Hemisphere. According to the testimony of Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA), Arturo Valenzuela, in a March 10, 2010 address to the US House of Representatives, *‘Our challenge is to carefully use our diplomatic and development tools, and our limited resources, to optimal effect.’* He highlighted three critical priorities for people in every country of this region: promoting social and economic opportunity for everyone; ensuring the safety of all our citizens and strengthening effective institutions of democratic governance, respect for human rights and accountability.

USAID Barbados/Eastern Caribbean’s initiatives for this region for the strategic period FY2011-FY2015 are therefore centered on similar priorities and grounded in a common strategic vision and coordinated internally with the interagency to ensure comprehensive and coherent planning and implementation. While our initiatives are mutually reinforcing, sharing broad objectives and some key activities, they vary in size, level of U.S support, complexity and level of development. The combination of a common strategic approach and distinct but interlocking, regional initiatives provides the necessary unity of effort as well as the flexibility necessary to help address unique circumstances that vary by country in the sub-region.

The core geographic focus of USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean’s FY2011-FY2015 Strategy is the six independent countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS - Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and Grenadines) and Barbados, with elements of the strategy to be implemented in Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname.

2. Regional Context

The countries of the Caribbean region are spread across an area of hundreds of miles of ocean and comprise several distinct nation-states, each with its own unique history, vulnerabilities, cultural perspectives, political dynamics and economic means. The countries have strong parliamentary traditions, a commendable record of enforcing the rule of law and respecting human rights, however they remain inherently vulnerable to natural disasters and economic shifts outside of their control. Wide income disparities among these nations and significant income disparities within each society exist. Poverty and especially unequal wealth distribution are serious and growing issues in this region affecting social and political stability and increased vulnerability to narco-trafficking, especially as the continuing global recession forces a painful contraction in each island nation’s economy. Recent assessments of the social safety net in select

eastern Caribbean nations have highlighted their vulnerability and the fragility of their economic and social progress over the past couple of decades.

Political Context

CARICOM member states boast open democracies with strong participation in elections and are characterized by political stability. Political parties are generally broad-based with strong connections to the labor movement. This nexus has made for somewhat difficult relations between public sector and trade unions in wage setting and employment issues which has resulted in overly large state sectors. In addition, shifting party affiliation is not uncommon among political actors in the sub-region, which has, at times, affected policy stability. Recent national elections in St. Kitts and Nevis and in Dominica have returned the same government to office, while post-election disputes continue to roil the political waters of Antigua and Barbuda. Elections are constitutionally due by December 2010 and in 2011 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Lucia, respectively.

Governance

The public service in the region is characterized by well established organizational structures and institutional rules and regulations, general respect for the rule of law and a high degree of judicial independence. World Governance Indicators (2008) place the OECS countries within the 50-90th percentile in governance worldwide. In the latest 2009 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranking prepared by Transparency International, out of 180 countries, Barbados ranked 20th, St. Lucia ranked 22nd, St. Vincent and the Grenadines ranked 31st, Dominica ranked 34th while the larger territories of Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago ranked 75th and 79th respectively. (other OECS countries were not surveyed). Responding to the economic challenges faced by the OECS countries, their governments continue to strive to improve performance of the public sector by focusing on incremental strengthening and modernization, improving the quality of service delivery and responding to citizen's demands.

Recent Economic Developments

The food and energy price hikes in 2007 and early 2008 and the global financial crisis in late 2008 severely affected the economies of all the countries in the region, with Trinidad & Tobago to a lesser extent. These events have come at a time when the region is attempting to adjust to the loss of preferences for its historical commodities of sugar and bananas by transitioning to service oriented economies. The GDP growth in the OECS region started to decelerate in 2007 and declined to below 2 percent in 2008. A slowdown in global economic activity, combined with higher fuel prices has dampened the tourism market, one of the region's key exports. Tourism has been hit by more stringent travel requirements for U.S. citizens, and weaker economic conditions in the United States as well as the recent UK tax on Caribbean-bound tourists. Moreover, high fuel costs are forcing major airlines cut back their routes. The weak U.S. dollar propped up demand by Canadian and European tourists, but slower growth in these countries has continued to affect tourism demand.

Similarly, as the impacts of the global financial crisis affected regional financial institutions, the contribution of the banking and insurance sector to growth declined as well. These impacts, combined with a drying up of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows which until recently had comfortably financed the majority of the large current account deficit, led to significant contraction of economic activity in the OECS.

Figure 1 Contributions to growth in OECS, by country (percent per year)

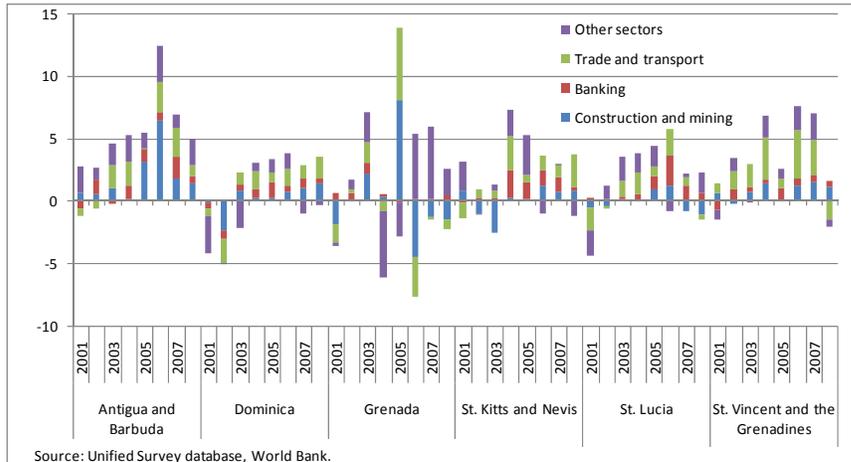


Table 1 shows contributions to growth by economic sectors in OECS from 2001-2007. However, OECS growth in 2009 was generally negative, but performance has varied widely across individual countries. With the exception of Dominica, where growth of 1.1 percent

in 2009 has been underpinned by strong post-hurricane recovery of the banana industry and construction activity financed by public sector development projects, output is estimated to have contracted in all other OECS members, ranging from a 6.5 percentage point decline in Antigua and Barbuda to a 1.1 percentage point contraction in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Countries have also been increasingly moving to allow 'full pass-through' of higher international fuel prices to domestic prices.

With more costly imports, the external current account deficit has soared in most Caribbean countries as well. The rise in food and fuel imports has pushed the current account deficits to as high as 35 percent of GDP in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). Financing for current account deficits is expected to continue to come mainly from foreign direct investment and external assistance most notably via Petrocaribe, a Caribbean oil alliance with Venezuela to purchase oil on conditions of preferential payment. A number of countries (including Barbados, and St. Lucia) are targeting lower fiscal deficits while others have also sought to soften the negative consequences of the rising cost of food on the poor through measures ranging from cuts to domestic tax rates and import tariffs to targeted subsidies.

See table 1 below for some key economic indicators for the OECS.

Table 1. OECS Main Economic Indicators, 2008

	Antigua & Barbuda	Dominica	Grenada	St. Kitts & Nevis	St. Lucia	St. Vincent & Grenadines
Area (sq km)	442	750	345	269	616	388
Population (persons)	85,536	73,193	105,552	49,190	169,960	109,117
GDP (US\$ millions)	1,225	364	638	540	1,011	594
GDP per capita, PPP	21,323	8,696	8,541	16,160	9,907	9,155
Real GDP growth	2.8	3.2	2.2	3.2	0.7	0.9
CPI inflation (% end of period)	2.3	1.9	5.2	7.6	3.8	8.7
Primary balance (% GDP)	-3.2	1	-3	5.3	0.2	1.2
Overall balance (% GDP)	-7.7	-0.8	-5.1	-3.5	-3.3	-1.7
Public sector debt (US\$ millions)	1,136	298	652	959	709	401
Public sector debt (% GDP)	92.7	81.8	102.2	177.6	70.1	67.5
Current account balance (% GDP)	-34.8	-32.3	-40.4	-28.5	-34.5	-33.7

Source: World Bank, IMF

The recovery from the crisis in the OECS continues to lag behind most other countries including those of Latin America, as GDP growth rates are expected to be sluggish in 2010 before recovering in 2011/2012.

Economic Cooperation and Integration

Twelve CARICOM Member States are participating in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) whose primary elements are the free movement of goods, skilled nationals, services, and capital. Further steps at deepening and strengthening of the regional integration process were evidenced with the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) and the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) which provides financial and technical assistance to disadvantaged countries so they can fully derive the benefits from the integration process. In executing these mandates the CDF provides financial and technical assistance to the public and private sectors.

More recently on June 18, 2010, the sub-grouping of key relevance for this strategy, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), signed an Economic Union treaty replacing the Treaty of Basseterre which created the sub-regional grouping. The signing of the treaty paves the way for the free movement of people, goods, services and capital among participating countries. OECS member countries already cooperate in several areas including a common Eastern Caribbean currency, joint regulation of banking and securities, and joint procurement of medicine.

The new treaty, however, promises “joint actions” and “joint policies” by member-countries in areas such as the judiciary and the administration of justice; external relations including overseas representation; international trade agreements; international marketing of goods and services; education including tertiary education; telecommunications; intellectual property rights; external transportation and communications; and public administration and management.

Poverty

Poverty in the OECS ranges from about 18 percent to 38 percent of the population despite the fact that most countries in the sub-region are ranked as “medium” or “high” on the UNDP Human Development Index. Rates have probably increased after the latest financial crisis but there is uncertainty about its impact on the gap between rich and poor in all countries, as data is not readily available to calculate this inequality.

Gender

In the Caribbean, gender dynamics and the opportunities or constraints these create in terms of decision-making power and access to education and employment are a conundrum in comparison with trends in other regions or countries. USAID’s recently concluded Gender Assessment (July 2010), highlighted how gender inequalities have tilted toward problems of male marginalization, especially in terms of underachievement and school drop-out rates. However, while the educational attainment of women far exceeds that of men, women’s employment prospects remain limited with most confined to low status, low pay positions. Moreover, valid concerns are growing about the plight of Caribbean men, especially the youth. Gender-stereotyping and inequalities based on socially-proscribed roles and expectations remain strong predictors of socio-economic status and power relations in both the private and public spheres, negatively affecting the life-choices and opportunities of both men and women.

3. Key Development Challenges and Priorities

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a declaration of the world’s commitment to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality, and extending hope and opportunity to millions across the developing world. The eight goals, organized around internationally agreed targets, have provided a framework to translate our highest ideals into concrete action. They also have helped mobilize unprecedented political support and resources for development. Enormous progress has been made so far toward meeting the MDGs, and we must recognize, celebrate, and support these achievements.

For example, since the MDGs’ baseline year for assessing progress, 1990, the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day has fallen by 400 million, decreasing from 42 to 25 percent of the world’s population and putting the MDG poverty target within reach; Primary school enrollment and completion rates have increased substantially across the developing world; Almost two-thirds of developing countries have met the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary education. The goal of doing so in secondary education by 2015 is within reach; Due to successful HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care programs, AIDS-related mortality has decreased, and more than four million people in the developing world are receiving antiretroviral treatment;

These achievements are also testimony to the impact of smart, targeted donor investments coupled with strategic partnerships. These partnerships—between developing-country governments, bilateral donors, international organizations, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and civil society—have allowed countries to make some of the historic strides envisioned in the MDGs. Underlying the most successful partnerships has been a strong spirit of mutual accountability.

Though much has been achieved, much remains to be done and the USG strategy is one that articulates a results-focus and is guided by four imperatives: “leveraging innovation; investing in sustainability; tracking development outcomes, not just dollars; and enhancing the principle and the practice of mutual accountability”.¹

The challenges in the Caribbean specifically, stem from the fragility of Caribbean micro-state economies currently in transition from commodity driven economies to service oriented economies, and which are largely dependent on tourism for their economic foundation. This has led to unsustainable debt loads and a weakened capacity to provide critical governmental services, including their ability to secure and monitor their borders or deter transnational criminal organizations from taking root. Crime and citizen security therefore presents itself as a major challenge and priority for countries in the region as does a response to the increasing trend of joblessness among the youth, the need for regional coordination to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic and climate vulnerabilities.

Reducing Crime and Enhancing Citizen Security

In its 2007 Report *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean*, the UNODC/World Bank noted that “*the high rates of crime and violence in the Caribbean are undermining growth, threatening human welfare, and impeding social development.*” The Report also makes the telling point that “*the strongest explanation for the relatively high crime and violence rates in the region – and their apparent rise in recent years – is narcotics trafficking.*”

The geographical location of the region between the major drug producing states and the consuming markets has increased the vulnerability of Caribbean states to the effects of the transnational illicit drug trade, associated crime and other forms of transnational organized crime. Further, as a region of mainly small territories, the Caribbean lacks the domestic capacity to address these security challenges.

Strengthening Institutional and Organizational Capacity

Civil services in the Caribbean are permanent institutional structures, providing continuity, institutional memory and stability at the administrative level, irrespective of who leads at the political level. They are also large, bureaucratic and at times burdensome to these small economies. In most eastern Caribbean territories, capacity is lacking in public sector investment programming, which is of particular concern in the sub-region. Improving the efficiency and transparency of public expenditures and the efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services continue to be high priorities for the governments of the sub-region.

In addition to these institutional problems, organizational capacity constraints exist. Even though the OECS countries are small and have extremely limited resources, the span of their public sector functions matches that of many large countries. Given their size and though many governments have taken steps to privatize or commercialize some of their functions, the mandate for Ministries appears to be too wide relative to their ability to deliver on it.

¹ CELEBRATE, INNOVATE AND SUSTAIN: Toward 2015 and Beyond The United States’ Strategy for Meeting the Millennium Development Goals July 2010

Improving Human Development

OECS countries have been successful in increasing enrolment at both primary and secondary education levels, but improving education quality, relevance and efficiency continues to be a challenge. Primary education is universal and transition rates from primary to secondary have increased over time. Despite this, falling levels of literacy and numeracy is a growing concern. High youth unemployment and skills shortages indicate that there is a disconnect between supply of skills and labor market demands. These poor outcomes appear to be the result of several competing factors including a shortage of qualified teachers, a weak curriculum, and an inability of education and training programs to adapt in a timely manner to respond to changing labor market needs. The ability of youth to enter the job market or to establish businesses is becoming increasingly challenging and of great concern to the region as this issue feeds into growing involvement of youth in crime and violence or the drug trade. This results in economies being deprived of potentially good employees and productive entrepreneurs while at the same time represents a cost to the growth of countries.

Governments of the sub-region have also been pre-occupied with identifying ways to deliver quality, cost-effective health services more efficiently. The incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cancer, strokes and coronary disease has been rapidly increasing in the OECS. OECS governments have agreed that implementing/upgrading health information systems (HIS) is an effective means of strengthening their healthcare systems overall and have decided on preparing a regional strategic plan by 2012.²

The Caribbean continues to be more heavily affected with HIV/AIDS than any region outside sub-Saharan Africa, with the second highest regional level of adult HIV prevalence (1.0 percent).³ The AIDS epidemic is the leading cause of death among Caribbean adults 25 to 44 years of age and has orphaned approximately 250,000 Caribbean children. In 2007, some 14,000 Caribbean nationals died of AIDS, and an estimated 20,000 people were newly infected with HIV. The epidemic is shifting to younger populations, increasingly affecting the most productive segments of society and is significantly impacting national economies.⁴

Given the economic and environmental vulnerabilities of the small island nations of the eastern Caribbean, the high degree of inter-island mobility, and social factors, activities to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic must be specifically tailored to meet unique country needs, while at the same time addressing HIV/AIDS as a regional problem.

Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Disasters and Strengthening Environmental Management

OECS countries face a high level of risk to their economic stability and livelihoods, associated with natural hazards, water availability and a changing climate. This is the case despite their significant investment in response capacity and progress in understanding disaster vulnerabilities across sectors and geographical areas. In particular, aging public infrastructure presents very high levels of vulnerability in sectors such as health, education, water, and roads. The annually returning hurricane season, exacerbated by the effects of climate change, and combined with less frequent but devastating geological events will therefore continue to be a serious drag on the development prospects of OECS members. To reduce the adverse impacts (loss of lives, infrastructure damage and high insurance costs) of these natural phenomena, there is a continued need to rebuild damaged infrastructure with more resilient structures, to reduce the current

² Health Information Systems Workshop, Belize, August 17-19, 2009.

³ <http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/Regions/Caribbean.asp>, accessed 21 Dec. 2009

⁴ PANCAP, Caribbean Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS (2008-2012), pgs. 9-15

vulnerability of critical infrastructure and to complement with comprehensive disaster risk reduction measures, such as preventative maintenance, appropriate zoning, hazard mapping, establishment and enforcement of construction codes, disaster information mechanisms and flood and landslide mitigation measures.

Threats to the sub-region's ecosystems include over exploitation of their resource base, loss of natural habitats, changes in water quality and quantity, and climate change.⁵ Under current trends, an estimated US\$350-870 million will be lost annually between 2015 and 2050 through declining fish catch, reduction in tourism demand, and loss of shoreline protection associated with coral reef degradation across the Caribbean.⁶ Reliable and consistent sources of funding to monitor and address the challenges delineated above are limited and are compounded by major regulatory and institutional shortcomings.

Climate change resulting growing variability in weather patterns represents a significant challenge to the region given the fact that most countries are island nations and are susceptible to sea level rise and resulting potential impacts to coastal regions. Variability in rainfall patterns also can have a devastating impact on water resources in the region and the ultimate stability of these countries if the process is not properly managed. There is therefore an urgent need for the countries to put in place adaptation strategies to counter the effects of climate change.

USAID's longstanding relationship and on-the-ground presence in the Caribbean enables the USG to play a strategic and catalytic role in influencing host government reforms and development programs. With the focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), countries are increasing spending on health and education and are receptive to assistance to help them address key challenges, such as health care access, out-of-school youth, and student achievement. Sustaining these gains will however require additional and sustained increases in health and education spending throughout the region – resources that can only be mobilized through better revenue administration and expenditure control.

4. U.S. Foreign Policy and Foreign Assistance Goals

The USG seeks democratic, inclusive, prosperous and secure nations in the Western Hemisphere by recognizing the “*transformational power of democracy and the central roles that open, economic systems and social inclusion must play within democracy*”.⁷ Within the Western Hemisphere, USAID Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) goals work in concert with the full range of USG assistance and host country government initiatives to build capacity of governments and institutions to tackle key regional security challenges under the Peace and Security Functional Objective; increase the political health of the region's democracies under the Governing Justly and Democratically Functional Objective; and combat both new and traditional

⁵ The sub-region suffers from weather related hazards and, due to a warming climate, rising sea levels and intensifying storms and rainfall concentration are exacerbating most of these existing hazards patterns and could create stress on water supply. Major events affecting the Eastern Caribbean in recent history include Hurricane Georges (1998), Hurricane Ivan (2004), Hurricane Dean (2007) and Hurricane Omar (2008). The sub-region is also at risk to significant geological hazards. Although not occurring as frequently as the annual hurricane season, earthquake, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis have in the past caused catastrophic damage in the Eastern Caribbean.

⁶ Burke, L. and Maidens, J. 2004. *Reefs at Risk in the Caribbean*. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

⁷ Department of STATE/USAID Strategic Plan FY2007-2012

threats to citizen safety under the Investing in People and Economic Growth Functional Objectives.

Specifically in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, USG's interest center on advancing the interrelated objectives of Peace and Security, specifically counterterrorism; Governing Justly and Democratically; Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity; and combating HIV/AIDS. For USAID to maintain its relevance as a key instrument of USG foreign policy in the Eastern Caribbean, and as a development partner of choice, the Mission's aim is to have new programs that address in a holistic manner a set of inter-related problems affecting youth of the region – poor education, weak employment skills, a weak juvenile justice system, and increasing crime and violence.

Firstly, a new paradigm for U.S. cooperation with the Caribbean on issues of citizen safety and shared security cooperation between the United States and the countries of the Caribbean will be witnessed through the Presidential Initiative, Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), bringing to bear increased resources for assorted law enforcement activities and various forms of youth-focused crime prevention. CBSI, a multi-year initiative announced at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, will expand efforts to foster citizen safety in the region by complementing existing programs of the United States and other stakeholders. For USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean to be an effective partner in this initiative, it will need sufficient flexibility to expand the scope of its assistance and sufficient funds to make a real and sustainable impact in the region. Funding has subsequently been provided to include Basic Education and Juvenile Justice Initiatives which will support the expansion in the Mission's program portfolio focusing on youth.

Secondly, direct and indirect impacts from climate change are also undermining past advances and progress toward sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) as evidenced by increased frequency and intensity of storms, with up to an estimated 2% of GDP loss with each extreme weather event. Rising oceans, coral bleaching, and more frequent natural disasters threaten the region's thriving tourism industry as storms not only damage flora and fauna, but also hotels, coastal roads, potable water systems, and other infrastructure. It is against this background that USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean's second major program of activities has been developed: a two-pronged climate change initiative in support of national adaptation strategies including a combination of policy measures, capacity building and site specific measures to address vulnerabilities of low-lying coastal areas and the management of fresh water resources.

Thirdly, as part of the new **U.S.- Caribbean Regional HIV/AIDS Partnership Framework**, USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean will enlarge its work to strengthen its partnerships and build new strategic alliances with countries in the region to enhance their capacities to provide a more robust and effective response to mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS across this region through the provision of comprehensive and integrated prevention, care, and treatment programs.

USAID, through USG interagency program and operating separately, is therefore committed to seeing the region build on its strengths by supporting efforts that promote economic growth, protect its citizens, and develop increased human and institutional capacity in the region.

5. Synergies with Other USG Agencies and Programs

Synergies with other USG agencies are regularly pursued in weekly meetings of the Embassy Bridgetown County Team, in which the USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean Mission

Director participates. The other USG participants in the Interagency at Embassy Bridgetown include Department of State (DOS), Department of Defense (DOD), Center for Disease Control (CDC), Peace Corps (PC), and various law enforcement agencies.

All three major USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean program objectives, Governing Justly and Democratically, Investing in People and Economic Growth, demonstrate the strengths of synergy in the Interagency. CBSI for example, will use a collaborative, multi-agency, multi national approach involving USAID, DOS, DOD, DOJ, DHS and the nations of CARICOM and will complement the Merida Initiative, the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), and Plan Colombia achievements to create a durable, mature regional structure to address both regional partnership and host nation requirements. Two key components under the CBSI which will benefit USAID's support to countries are Basic Education and Juvenile Justice.

The comprehensive package of assistance to twelve Caribbean governments and two regional entities -- the U.S.- Caribbean Regional HIV/AIDS Partnership Framework -- has quickly become a model of inter-agency technical support which includes DOS, USAID, CDC, PC, DOD, Health and Human Services (HHS) and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). USAID's HIV/AIDS funding has been included in the Regional Operational Plan (ROP) which is linked to the Partnership Framework Implementation Plan (PFIP) that was developed in close consultation with the country and regional partners to address the fight against HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean region. The ROP activities listed in the Technical Area Narratives and Implementing Mechanisms were prioritized with national and regional partners, in the context of the Partnership Framework. In-country consultations were conducted by teams of USG personnel with all twelve signatory countries and with the two regional agencies. The USG consulted with all relevant partners to determine how best to implement activities to achieve the Framework goals and objectives.

Under our Economic Growth portfolio, USAID is the primary USG entity supporting youth work. Periodic initiatives supporting youth hosted or supported by the Political/Economic, the Public Affairs, Military Liaison Offices within the Embassy and Peace Corps complement those of USAID.

II. GOVERNING JUSTLY & DEMOCRATICALLY

1. Situation Analysis and Rationale

The Caribbean region and in particular the six independent countries of the OECS, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname became signatories to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) having done so more than fifteen years ago. They are also participating states in subsequent international rules such as the Beijing Rules of 1985 and the Riyadh Guidelines of 1990, all of which provide the framework and guidelines for juvenile justice systems worldwide. These regional countries by signing the various agreements are bound by the articles and obligations to implement appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures to protect the rights of children/juveniles. Despite significant effort across the region to address the issue of juvenile justice, much remains to be done to ensure acceptable measures including restorative justice programs and diversion strategies that lift young people out of the traditional criminal justice system, are put in place. The following negative indicators or gaps for example have been identified in the Caribbean's penal system:

- Rising levels of juvenile delinquency and increasing numbers of young people who are either the perpetrators or victims of gang activity, gun violence, drug related offences and other serious crimes. These youth often are often manipulated by crime bosses or are used as foot soldiers for international drug traffickers.
- Many young persons including some who may be below the age of adulthood are reportedly languishing in jails, juvenile detention centers and/or being processed through existing justice systems along with adults.
- Existing juvenile justice and penal systems are not having the desired impact they should in contributing to the decrease in youth crimes and violence. In fact the opposite maybe a major contributing factor in the creation of more seasoned young offenders due to the actual situation including negative influence of incarcerated adults within the institutions.
- Inadequate training programs for police and other law enforcement agencies to improve their capacity to better manage the challenges of dealing with young people who find themselves in conflict with the law. This issue was cited recently by two Commissioners of Police as a significant weakness in their forces which have primarily become reactionary as they fire-fight high risk crimes using scarce resources.
- Lack of programs for counseling and development services for young persons including the role of families, parenting programs to help parents better support and assist their children thereby reducing the risk of being caught in the juvenile justice system.
- Need for legal reform to ensure compatibility with the CRC.

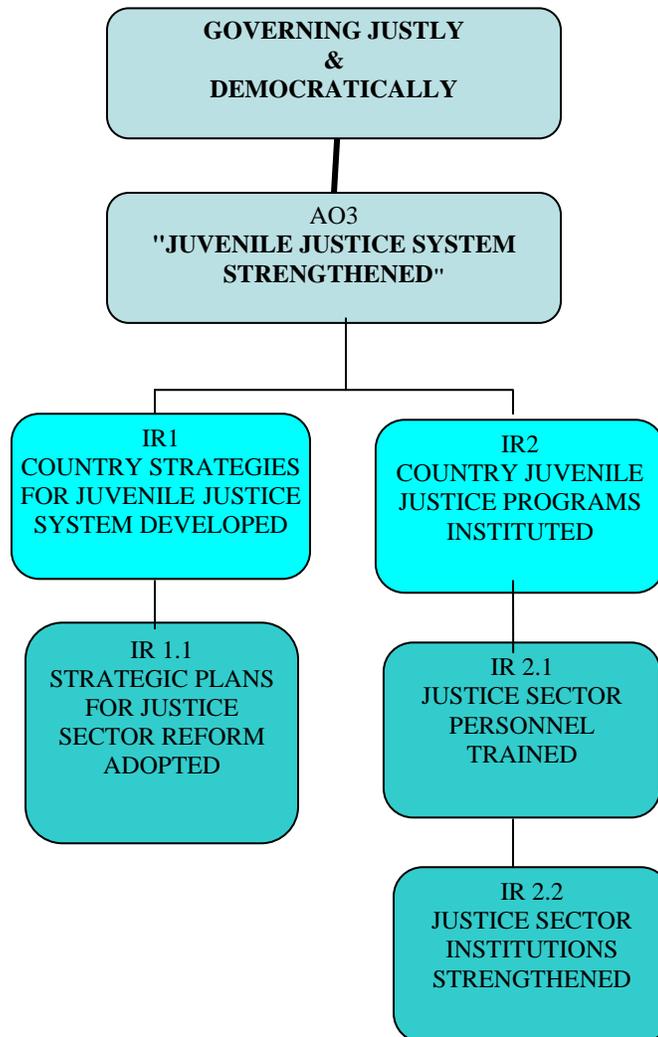
There are however positive steps over the years including attempts to put in place diversion programs from the justice system and from court proceedings in some countries; implementation of pre-trial options such as mediation and alternatives to custody such as community service programs; and the current process in the OECS with the development of model legislation on Child Justice which has been prepared by the OECS Secretariat. In this latter case, when the Justice Bill is adopted and enacted in the Eastern Caribbean countries it will bring the countries legislation governing children finally in conformity with international norms and guidelines.

Support for a strengthened juvenile justice system enhances the goal of minimizing the use of custodial approaches to address young people who have ran afoul of the law. The existing juvenile justice and penal systems are not having the desired impact they should in contributing to the decrease in youth crimes and violence. Effective reform of the system will provide provide

greater opportunities for rehabilitation of youth back into society where they can become productive assets and therefore reduces the risk of them living a life of crime and violence which ultimately are a drag on the growth of the region's countries.

Following months of consultation between the Department of State and fifteen CARICOM states focusing on the security of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) was developed and recently signed. The process was backed by the development of a Spending Plan and Congressional Notification for the multi-year program. The program supports both hard side security initiatives as well as soft-side support focusing on youth at risk. USAID will CBSI resources to provide juvenile justice support over the medium term to the OECS countries, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname to address some of the critical gaps existing at a national level. Support will be pursued to ensure efficient use of resources across the countries with replication promoted where possible.

2. Results Framework



3. Anticipated Results over the 2011-2015 Strategy Period, Critical Assumptions and U.S. Foreign Assistance Priorities

At the end of the strategy USAID would have supported the strengthening of the juvenile justice system in the Eastern Caribbean, Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname bringing it closer to meet internationally agreed standards. The program will work across the focus countries but will work initially with the countries which are most receptive to modernizing their systems. The juvenile justice system is a critical function of national governments and therefore the assumption is that there will be broad-based support for change from governments, citizen's organizations and non-governmental organizations. At the end of five years, at least two of the focus countries would have instituted appropriate policy, legislation and instituted the relevant structural changes to ensure a functional juvenile justice system. The other focus countries would have instituted similar measures in some areas to move their modernization process forward.

Strengthening the juvenile justice sector will complement other USAID programming targeting other critical areas of the youth chain including support for an increase in the abilities of youth to become gainfully employed or to establish their own businesses thereby reducing the risk for them to become attractive to a life of crime and violence. Such reduction would ultimately result in fewer youth having to face the justice system thereby leading ultimately to reduced overall costs to the state. At the same time those youth who are sent through a restructured juvenile justice system would have a greater opportunity to be rehabilitated and assist in the growth of their country with a concomitant reduction in repeat offenders. A reduction in the number of youth engaged in crime and violence supports the US Government's security policy objectives for the region.

4. Strategic Focus

Program Area 2.1: Rule of Law and Human Rights

The focus of USAID's program will be to support the strengthening of rule of law and human rights in the juvenile justice system in the countries of the Eastern Caribbean, Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname. The goal will be to support these countries taking steps to meet their obligations under the international Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the various treaties related to juvenile justice thereby ensuring an improvement in the situation for juveniles who come into conflict with the law. Programming will support Pillar III of CARICOM's Action Plan for Social and Development Crime Prevention 2009 – 2013 which focuses on the integration of offenders back into societies.⁸

5. Strategic Subsectors and Illustrative Activities

USAID's resources during the current year will be used to support the development of a three-five year program which will strengthen juvenile justice systems in the countries of the Eastern Caribbean, Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname. This effort will be USAID's first foray in this specific area of the region's justice system and is a critical element of our wider youth program. The program will be implemented under Program Element Justice System with Sub-Element being Operations of Institutions and Actors.

⁸ Caribbean Community Action Plan for Social and Development Crime Prevention 2009-2013: prepared by CARICOM Secretariat in Collaboration with UNODC

USAID will use the results of a planned assessment of the juvenile justice sector which will identify the current status of the sector in each of the focus countries, providing relevant data and analysis to support a robust program to strengthen the juvenile justice system. Programming is expected to focus in key areas including as necessary (i) community intervention programs; (ii) diversion from court; (iii) the juvenile court; (iv) reforms to the incarceration phase including sentencing options; and (v) support for related citizens services. The program's implementation components would include policy and legislative interventions, training leading to the improved professionalization of key personnel, development of revised processes for treatment of children who commit offences and support for centers where children are detained.

6. Preliminary Performance Management Plan

Tackling the restructuring of the overall juvenile justice system in the Eastern Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname is not entirely within USAID's manageable interest. However, the following initial indicators relevant to this objective will be tracked:

- Number of USG assisted strategic plans for justice sector reform adopted
- Number of justice sector personnel receiving USG assisted training
- Number of Justice institutions and associations supported by USG

7. Approaches and Funding Across Sub-sectors

The development of the juvenile justice strengthening program will be implemented regionally with national benefits for the Eastern Caribbean countries and nationally for the other focus countries. The relevant Program Element is Justice System as initiatives will support the improvement of the juvenile justice sector through capacity building supporting reform and sustainability measures, enhanced professionalization and coordination with and amongst the various actors, and increased citizen involvement into the process.

USAID will coordinate its efforts with UNICEF, the current lead external agency support reforms to the juvenile justice system to ensure complementary and effective programming leading to the countries meeting their international obligations in practical terms. USAID will also support complementary programming whether by its broader youth program or by others in areas such as basic education, and workforce development to support youth who are caught in the justice system. The approach will seek to address youth issues in a wholesome manner in order to support the success of the program. The program will use the results from a regional assessment supported by extensive regional and national consultations supported by a review of successful external juvenile justice models to support program definition and implementation. A critical element for the success of the program will be full government buy-in to reform measures commitment to their full and sustained implementation. Therefore their involvement as well as the identification of key leaders from civil society will be key elements of program design and implementation. Gender considerations will be ingrained into the program given the high proportion of male to female in the system.

The juvenile justice initiative supports the US Government's strategy as announced at the 2009 Summit of the Americas which promised significant resources to the region to support security initiatives. The result was the establishment of the CBSI through which resources will be made available for juvenile justice reform. Resources of the order of \$3-\$5m/year, complementing national resources, will be required to support significant reforms to the juvenile justice sector

with the expectation that at the end of a five-year period the region would have experienced significant strengthening and the creation of model systems in the sector.

8. Synergies with Other Donor Programs

Donor support in the area of juvenile justice in the region has generally been sporadic over the years with the exception of interventions by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which has been the lead external agency supporting the move to have a modern juvenile justice system in place. UNICEF provides technical and financial support for the development and implementation of programs and policies which lead to the protection of children. Areas of support include: research that creates awareness of issues affecting children; drafting legislation and protocols leading to better care for children; training and public education and sensitization for key professionals working in the field; and advocacy for regular reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. USAID will work closely with UNICEF in the development and implementation of programs to ensure complementary approaches which will lead to a modern juvenile justice system in the region.

9. Potential Partners

Potential partners include the OECS Secretariat working in tandem with national governments in the OECS; and the governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. Related communities or citizens groups will also be targeted where their role intersects with reforming the juvenile justice system in each of the countries. Initiatives carried out by partners will complement the social and crime prevention goals of CARICOM.

III. INVESTING IN PEOPLE

1. Situation Analysis

The Caribbean region has the second highest HIV prevalence in the world after sub-Saharan Africa. The AIDS epidemic continues to be the leading cause of death among Caribbean adults 25 to 44 years of age and has orphaned approximately 250,000 Caribbean children.⁹ In 2007, some 14,000 Caribbean nationals died of AIDS, an estimated 20,000 people were newly infected with HIV, and an estimated 234,000 people were living with HIV, with three quarters of those infected living in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.¹⁰ Though high quality epidemiological data are limited across the Caribbean region, the region's estimated adult prevalence (15 - 49 years of age) is 1.1 percent with a male-to-female ratio of approximately 2:1. National prevalence in the general population ranges from nearly zero to 3 percent (0.1 percent in Cuba to 2.1 percent in Belize and 3 percent in the Bahamas).¹¹ Despite lower infection rates, women now represent about 45 percent of reported AIDS cases, perhaps due to nearly universal antenatal HIV testing of pregnant women. In many cases, the HIV epidemic is shifting to younger populations, but with different gender patterns across countries. For example, in 2007, HIV prevalence in young males 15 - 24 years of age in the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica was twice as high as prevalence in the corresponding female cohort. The opposite was true in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, where HIV prevalence in young females 15 - 24 years of age was at least twice as high as prevalence in the corresponding male cohort.¹² National averages mask alarmingly higher prevalence among persons engaging in high risk, often highly stigmatized behaviors.

The Caribbean region has achieved significant progress towards its goal of universal anti-retroviral treatment (ART), having extended ART to approximately 43 percent of treatment-eligible Caribbean people by 2007.¹³ Yet, with over half the region's estimated number of treatment-eligible persons still not receiving ART services, a significant coverage gap remains. While considerable progress is being made to improve access to HIV-related care and treatment services to People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV), most Caribbean nations lack sufficient health system and workforce capacity to meet the estimated need. In addition, measurements of quality and outcomes of current treatment, care and support services are limited. If current trends persist, the HIV epidemic will continue to grow in the Caribbean. WHO/UNAIDS projections estimate a 13 percent growth in HIV infections by 2015. Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) anticipates that the demand for ART will double in the same time period. With infections increasingly affecting the most productive segments of society, the epidemic may begin to significantly impact national economies.¹⁴ Left unchecked, rising prevalence in the Caribbean region could adversely impact North, Central, and South America. Clearly, though Caribbean nations face other high priority public health challenges such as the prevention and treatment of diabetes and heart disease, HIV and AIDS is a significant, long-term threat to socio-economic development and health security in the region.

⁹ USAID Caribbean HIV/AIDS Health Profile, February 2008, p.4

¹⁰ UNAIDS Fact Sheet: Key facts by region—2007 AIDS Epidemic Update, p.2 (Caribbean)

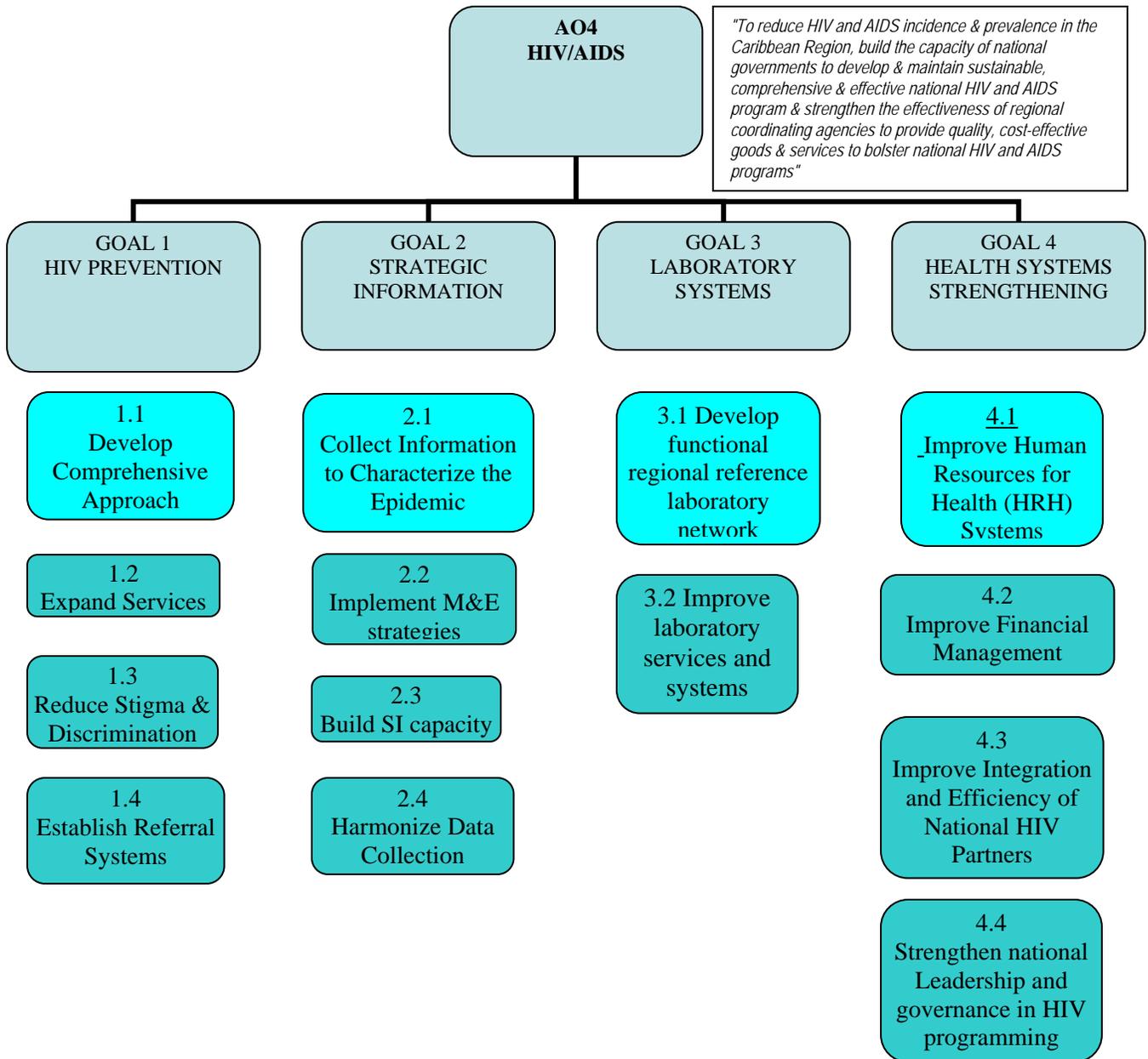
¹¹ 2008 UNGASS Country Progress Reports of Cuba, Belize and the Bahamas

¹² UNAIDS/WHO, 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, July 2008, p. 234

¹³ World Health Organization: "Towards Universal Access: Scaling up priority HIV/AIDS interventions in the health sector" 2008 Progress Report (p. 18, Table 2.1)

¹⁴ PANCAP, Caribbean Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS (2008-2012), pgs. 9-15

2. Results Framework



The HIV/AIDS results framework above has been derived from the U.S. – Caribbean Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Framework Implementation Plan found in Annex 2.

3. Anticipated Results over the 2011-2015 Strategy Period, Critical Assumptions and U.S. Foreign Assistance Priorities

In light of the threat posed by HIV and AIDS worldwide, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was reauthorized by the U.S. Congress in July 2008. The new legislation requires U.S. Government (USG) agencies supporting HIV and AIDS activities abroad to work closely with national, regional, and international partners to develop a non-binding, five-year joint strategic plan or Partnership Framework based upon shared goals and objectives,

mutual contributions, and measurable outcomes. The purpose of the U.S. – Caribbean Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Framework (hereafter, the “Framework”) is to reduce HIV and AIDS incidence and prevalence in the Caribbean region, build the capacity of national governments to develop and maintain sustainable, comprehensive and effective national HIV and AIDS programs and strengthen the effectiveness of regional coordinating agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide quality, cost-effective goods and services to bolster national HIV and AIDS programs.

By coordinating HIV and AIDS initiatives and combining USG and Caribbean regional and national resources, this Framework should further strengthen Caribbean national government and regional capacity for a more robust and effective response to mitigate the epidemic’s impact across the region. This Framework represents an agreement between the U.S. Government and Caribbean partners to establish strategic alignment in the fight against HIV and AIDS through joint decision-making in setting programmatic priorities and partner contributions. This Framework, led by the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) and developed through extensive consultations with national and regional Caribbean stakeholders, utilizes and builds upon the respective strengths and technical expertise of all partners.¹⁵ This has also been the case with the Regional Operating plan (ROP), and the Partnership Framework Implementation Plan (PFIP) which are all linked, and prioritized with national and regional partners, in the context of the Partnership Framework. In-country consultations were conducted by teams of USG personnel with all 12 signatory countries and with the two regional agencies, PANCAP and OECS. The Framework is designed in alignment with the national HIV and AIDS strategic plans of each partner country and with the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS, 2008-2012 (CRSF). The CRSF articulates the vision and collective priorities of Caribbean governments through their membership in The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and their support for CARICOM’s Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP).

The core premise of the new CRSF is that an effective response to the HIV epidemic depends on the commitment, capacity, and leadership of the region’s national authorities.”¹⁶ The Framework, like the CRSF, adopts a country-centered approach, recognizing that sustainable, comprehensive and country-driven HIV programs are essential to overall regional success in reducing the spread and impact of HIV and related sexually transmitted and opportunistic infections, including tuberculosis. The central focus of the Framework is to expand partner countries’ capacity to plan, oversee, and manage their national response to HIV and AIDS and deliver quality services with the participation of local civil society and communities, and ultimately, to finance health programs. However, the Framework is also designed to strengthen regional public health agencies, regional non-governmental organizations and regional multilateral initiatives.

¹⁵ The U.S. Government, in partnership with PANCAP, hosted a consultative meeting from April 29-30, 2009 in St. Lucia to solicit stakeholder input regarding strategy development for this Partnership Framework. Initial input from the St. Lucia meeting was used to develop a first draft of the Framework which was then circulated in June and July for review by over seventy-five Caribbean stakeholders from Ministries of Health and National AIDS Programs in all twelve partner countries as well as CARICOM, the OECS, and numerous non-governmental and international organizations involved with HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean region. The USG received many substantive responses in writing and by phone and underwent internal deliberations to produce this final draft of the U.S. – Caribbean Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Framework.

¹⁶ PANCAP, CRSF, pg. 7

Through mutual ownership and accountability, shared principles and joint oversight, this Framework supports the achievement of Caribbean national and regional goals and objectives as well as PEPFAR's global goals.¹⁷ A priority, overarching goal of this Framework is to enhance the capacity of Caribbean national governments and regional organizations to even more effectively lead and manage the national and regional HIV and AIDS response. Ultimately, the Framework aims to increase partner countries' capacity to develop, lead, finance, and implement sustainable, comprehensive and effective national HIV and AIDS programs with the understanding that national governments will increasingly assume primary strategic and financial responsibility over the long-term.

The overall result should be sustainable, robust national government and regional agency leadership in policy-formulation and cost-effective provision of national and regional public goods and services, as well as strengthened capacity to provide key financial and technical resources, all of which are vital to a well-coordinated, effective response to the Caribbean region's HIV and AIDS epidemic.

4. Strategic Focus

Program Area 3.1: HIV/AIDS

Over the next five years, USAID supported efforts, as a contributing partner under the US-Caribbean Regional Partnership Framework (the Framework), should contribute to the achievement of the PANCAP CRSF's strategic vision "to substantially reduce the spread and impact of HIV in the Caribbean through sustainable systems of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support."¹⁸

The Framework shares the fundamental priorities of the CRSF, but places a specific emphasis on bolstering the region's HIV prevention services and resources; improving national and regional capacity for surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation; strengthening national and regional laboratory diagnostic and monitoring capacity; developing human resources for improved healthcare service delivery; and supporting national governments' capacity to implement effective, sustainable national HIV and AIDS programs. Because national governments provide treatment, care and support services with financial and technical assistance from other partners such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and the Clinton Foundation, this Framework does not place an emphasis on drug procurement or direct scale up of these services. The Framework seeks to contribute to the improvement or scale up of these services via systems strengthening and human capacity development. Overall, this Framework should support the realization of the CRSF vision through strategic objectives and interventions designed to achieve four high-level Partnership Framework goals developed through consultations with Caribbean partners.

USAID will focus its efforts on activities in relation to the following three of the four goal areas:

- i. **HIV Prevention:** To contribute to achievement of the CRSF goal of reducing the estimated number of new HIV infections in the Caribbean by 25 percent by 2013;

¹⁷ PEPFAR's global goals include treatment for at least 3 million people, prevention of 12 million infections, care for 12 million people, including 5 million orphans and vulnerable children, and training of at least 140,000 new health care workers in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care.

¹⁸ PANCAP, CRSF, pg. 21

- ii. **Strategic Information:** To improve the capacity of Caribbean national governments and regional organizations to increase the availability and use of quality, timely HIV and AIDS data to better characterize the epidemic and support evidence-based decision-making for improved programs, policies, and health services;
- iii. **Health Systems Strengthening:** To improve the capacity of Caribbean national governments and regional organizations to effectively lead, finance, manage and sustain the delivery of quality HIV prevention, care, treatment and support services at regional, national and community levels over the long term.

These goals speak to the long-term foreign assistance priorities and goals for USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean.

Program Area 3.2 Basic Education

USAID using resources under the CBSI will support the education strategy of the OECS countries over the next five years to improve the quality of youth graduating into the market to become productive members of society. The program will focus on strengthening basic education systems in particular in the area of numeracy and literacy to support out-of-school youth as well as to strengthen systems to reduce the chances of those dropping out of the system due to deficiencies in these areas. These areas of focus have been chosen as a result of weaknesses observed in the countries where USAID has supported pilot workforce development initiatives over the past two years.

Although the region has succeeded in nearly universal transition from primary to secondary school, far fewer youth complete secondary school due to conditions such as teen age pregnancy, school-related conflicts and poor academic achievement. Even fewer pass examinations and transition to tertiary education. To underscore this issue pass rates in the regional Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations in both English and Mathematics has declined in recent times. In the 2008 examinations, the pass rate for English was 54.3%, while that for mathematics was 47.4%. More importantly, in terms of preparing students to pursue tertiary level education or to enter the job market, the percentage of students achieving a minimum of five subject passes, including English and Mathematics, declined from 41% in 2001 to 38% in 2007. In 2009, only 21.4% of those students sitting the CXC examinations received passes in five or more subjects. In addition 51% had one or no subjects in 2009.¹⁹

A significant factor in the poor results is that too many students in the OECS drop out or leave school unable to read and to write. The absence of these basic skills limits their opportunities for employment or their earning capacities even if they were to find employment. They are usually unable to participate meaningfully in the development process and to engage properly in activities of civil society. Businesses that are unable to hire workers with basic skills such as literacy and numeracy backed by critical thinking are limited in their scope for growth and for transitioning from simple production processes to higher levels of competitiveness in the values ladder. The potential therefore for increasing numbers of Eastern Caribbean youth to lose their way as a result of the lack of basic skills and their drift into violence, economic stagnation, and hopelessness is high. A comprehensive education program including support for those who have dropped-out from the system is therefore a necessity for the region's survival.

¹⁹ OECS Secretariat, 2010

USAID support will therefore focus on (i) identifying measures to support drop-out prevention in secondary schools; (ii) strengthening dropout recovery and literacy programs for out of school youth; and (iii) supporting educational reform to create 21st century skill development with modern pedagogy and curriculum and with a significant focus on supporting communities where the needs are greatest. Initiatives will complement USAID's broader programming on youth under the strategy and which targets workforce development and youth economic opportunity.

5. Strategic Subsectors and Illustrative Activities

Under the Partnership Framework USAID will conduct activities in support of three of the four Goal Areas: HIV Prevention, Strategic Information and Health Systems Strengthening. Activities in each of these areas will be in support of both regional and national level objectives aimed at mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS as articulated in the CRSF and the National Strategic Plans of the respective countries under the purview of the USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean.

HIV Prevention:

Goal: Contribute to achievement of the CRSF goal of reducing the estimated number of new HIV infections in the Caribbean by 25 percent by 1013.

Efforts to scale up the HIV response in the region have not done enough to sufficiently target HIV prevention efforts in order to impact and address the drivers of the epidemic. The HIV epidemic in the Caribbean is primarily due to sexual transmission, with epidemiological and behavioral data suggesting concentrated epidemics with much higher prevalence among persons engaged in high-risk behaviors (PEHRBs) relative to the general population. These PEHRBs include men having sex with men (MSM), sex workers (SW), their clients, and those engaged in transactional sex. High risk behaviors by these groups are exacerbated by the influence of tourism in the region. Cross border mobility, coupled with socioeconomic challenges and harmful cultural norms – especially gender-based disparities, sexual coercion, multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, and transgenerational sex – further contribute to HIV transmission within vulnerable, most at-risk populations (MARPs), as does the stigma and discrimination faced by many high-risk groups.²⁰ HIV-related stigma and discrimination are also powerful barriers to reaching PLHIV with essential “prevention with people living with HIV/AIDS” (PwP) services, such as support for sero-discordant couples and expanded access to high quality, community-based care services.

Interventions should focus on reaching underserved PEHRBs and MARPs with a comprehensive combination HIV prevention strategy integrating multiple evidence-based prevention methodologies. “Combination prevention” is a strategic approach that includes behavioral, structural, and biomedical HIV prevention interventions adapted and prioritized to specific contexts (UNAIDS, 2004). This Framework intends to focus on behavioral interventions by scaling up the scope and use of evidence-based, gender-sensitive, and culturally appropriate HIV prevention interventions aimed at early detection of positives, behavior change and HIV risk reduction among PEHRBs, particularly sex workers (SWs) and their partners, MSM, military personnel, mobile/migrant populations, drug users, and at-risk youth. The Framework seeks to

²⁰ The field of HIV Prevention makes an important distinction between persons engaged in high risk behaviors (PEHRBs) and most-at risk populations (MARPs). In order for HIV prevention efforts to be most successful, interventions should target the source of increased HIV risk. While most at-risk populations are often associated with one or more specific high risk behaviors, non-behavioral economic, social or environmental factors such as poverty, orphan status, gender disparities, incarceration or migration may also increase the risk of HIV infection.

also emphasize PwP, which may be closely linked to home-based care and adult care and treatment programming. The generation and use of high quality strategic information under this Framework, especially related to MARPs, continues to be crucial to informing the development and implementation of effective, well-targeted and evidence-based prevention programs.

Efforts will also be engaged to provide technical assistance to build NGO and public sector capacity to provide high-quality, gender sensitive, non-discriminatory prevention services that can link individuals to HIV prevention and other support services, and reducing structural and physical barriers that affect MARPs' abilities to receive appropriate services. The USG plans to work with staff and leadership in government (including MOH, National AIDS programs, and other relevant Ministries such as Finance, Family, Youth and Sport, Defense and Gender and Labor) and with non-governmental organizations including FBO, CBO, PLWHA and advocacy groups. Through focused capacity building of local entities within the region, the USG investment in prevention should be maximized to allow for continued implementation and expansion of activities and approaches beyond the initial scope of the PF agreement.

Gender dynamics play a significant role in influencing the transmission of HIV in the region and need to be taken into consideration and gender analysis must be applied in all programming. Within the Caribbean, traditional and harmful cultural norms including multiple concurrent partnerships, accepted gender roles, transactional sex, trans-generational sex, gender-based socioeconomic and physiological disparities and the perpetuation of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), significantly contribute to the increasing vulnerability of women and girls to HIV infection. In addition to violating the human rights of both women and men, SGBV poses significant health risks, including immediate physical and psychological injury, as well as less obvious risks such as unsafe abortions, unwanted pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. The nature of the HIV epidemic in the region also lends itself to special considerations for men, given the large "hidden" population of men engaging in sex with men, their multiple sexual partnerships and their poor health seeking behaviors.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – PREVENTION

- 1.1: Build human, technical and institutional capacity in partner countries to effectively develop, implement, scale-up, and sustain comprehensive, "combination" HIV prevention strategies, including behavior change interventions for PEHRBs, PwP programs, and structural interventions that help address cultural, gender-specific and normative factors contributing to HIV risk
- 1.2: Increase access to and use of targeted HIV prevention information and services by MARPs and PEHRBs through expanding HIV testing and counseling and STI treatment services, using a wider array of community-based workers and facilities, and studying the feasibility of biomedical prevention interventions such as male circumcision
- 1.3: Facilitate and support cultural, legislative, regulatory, and policy changes to reduce stigma and discrimination, especially focused on enabling populations at elevated risk of infection to access and use HIV prevention-related services without fear of violence, loss of confidentiality, or discrimination
- 1.4: Strengthen appropriate linkages and referral systems between HIV prevention, care, treatment, and other support services within and across countries included in this Partnership Framework.

USAID will continue to invest in supporting targeted, evidence-based prevention strategies incorporating behavioral, biomedical and structural interventions aimed at delivering a minimum package of prevention services to populations considered most vulnerable to HIV infection.

Strategic Information:

Goal: To improve the capacity of Caribbean national governments and regional organizations to increase the availability and use of quality, timely HIV/AIDS data to better characterize the epidemic and support evidence-based decision-making for improved programs, policies, and health services.

Critical gaps in data quality and availability prevent many countries from “knowing their epidemic” and being able to pinpoint how many persons are infected with HIV, where new infections are occurring, and where the epidemic is most likely to spread. Nor are countries able to track patterns of HIV infection comprehensively over time and, at a regional level, across countries. Regionally, there is a lack of reliable, gender disaggregated data for decision-making, for patient case management, for policy formulation and for the development of well-targeted, evidence-based prevention, treatment and care programs. Challenges are posed by extreme shortages of skilled staff in the region and by methodological problems in data collection and sampling due to small population sizes in the majority of the Framework partner countries. In addition, HIV-vulnerable populations fear stigma and discrimination; their concerns about confidentiality in small-island and small-town settings make these most vulnerable persons least likely to come forward for HIV testing and participation in surveys and other research. Legal and cultural discrimination against many MARPs drives underground the behaviors that fuel the region’s HIV epidemic.

The Framework partners intend to work within national structures to implement the SI priorities through a phased, results-based technical assistance model approach that includes enhancing surveillance and reporting systems, improving capacity to monitor and evaluate national responses to HIV, and building human and systems capacity to collect data to characterize the epidemic and to develop effective program responses. Benchmarks for the SI goal area include: 1) the existence of functional and sustainable systems for strategic information in each of the 12 Framework countries by the end of the five year implementation period, and 2) generation, dissemination and use of data for surveillance and for routine program monitoring.

Health Systems Strengthening:

Goal: To improve the capacity of Caribbean national governments and regional organizations to effectively lead, finance, manage, and sustain the delivery of quality HIV prevention, care, treatment and support services at regional, national and community levels over the long term.

The WHO framework for action in health system strengthening that has been adopted as a way to structure thinking around HSS contains six building blocks: 1) service delivery, 2) health workforce, 3) information, 4) access to medical products, vaccines and technologies, 5) financing, and, 6) leadership and governance (stewardship).²¹ Under the Framework USAID will partner

²¹ Good **health services** are those which deliver effective, safe, quality personal and non-personal health interventions to those that need them, when and where needed, with minimum waste of resources; A well-performing **health workforce** is one that works in ways that are responsive, fair and efficient to achieve the best health outcomes possible, given available resources and circumstances (i.e. there are sufficient staff, fairly distributed; they are competent, responsive and productive); A well-functioning **health information** system is one that ensures the production, analysis, dissemination and use of reliable and timely information on health determinants, health system performance and health status; A well-functioning health system ensures equitable access to essential **medical products, vaccines and technologies** of assured quality, safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness, and their scientifically sound and cost-effective

with other strategic partners to contribute to efforts which seek to address the fundamental issues as they relate to two of these building blocks- 5) financing and 6) leadership and governance. In order to enhance and ultimately help sustain investments made in the HIV/AIDS responses at the regional and national levels, efforts and activities will be undertaken to provide technical assistance in the area of health sector financial reform, establishing and strengthening public-private partnerships in both the health sector and with the economic sector. In addition, the issues of leadership and governance, especially as it relates to policy reform are also critical to the issue of sustainability as it relates to addressing HIV/AIDS over the long course and these will also be addressed.

Although each country monitors its own health and HIV/AIDS spending accounts based on their individual practices, there is no standardized format and no single organization in the Caribbean tracking public financing for HIV/AIDS. Specific health and HIV/AIDS expenditure data from the World Health Organization (WHO) collected for the PF showed that Caribbean countries devote on average only 10 percent of their national budget to the health sector. Although countries support a large share of their HIV program costs, bilateral donors, multilateral donors, development partners and the GFATM support a good portion of the program costs as well. To help make national HIV programs sustainable in the region, governments need to begin looking for innovative approaches that allow for long-term financial sustainability. Searching for ways to promote cost efficiency requires working closely with national and international partners to plan, budget, streamline programming, eliminate duplication, and implement innovative approaches to providing HIV care, such as decentralizing services or providing integrated HIV care at the primary health care levels.

It is anticipated that from among the U.S. Government interagency Framework team USAID will assume the responsibility for planning and implementing technical assistance to Caribbean partners to improve their ability and capacity to use national budgetary resources for national HIV/AIDS programs. One of the planned activities under the Framework is to work with those Framework countries whose programs are heavily reliant on donor funding, to help design strategies for health sector financing reform. A comprehensive financial assessment for the Framework countries is planned in order to provide recommendations on how to bolster financial systems and build efficiencies in health care service delivery throughout the region to stretch limited health funding further.

Effective leadership and good governance is also pivotal to a successful HIV/AIDS response. Because HIV/AIDS services are administered through a combination of public, private and NGO partners, having a coordinated plan for integrating partners into the national response is essential for effective and efficient programming. Understanding weaknesses and opportunities within the different sectors working in health should facilitate coordination between National AIDS Programs and civil society partners. This requires that the private sector and civil society should be integrated into the national response to HIV/AIDS and included in advocacy for human rights and policy issues that influence HIV/AIDS. Across the region, National governments have not systematically developed relationships with the private sector and civil society organizations. At the regional level, PANCAP has supported the establishment of PLWHA organizations and civil society partnerships including faith-based organizations (FBOs) and organizations working with

use; A good **health financing** system raises adequate funds for health, in ways that ensure people can use needed services, and are protected from financial catastrophe or impoverishment associated with having to pay for them. It provides incentives for providers and users to be efficient; Leadership and governance (stewardship) involves ensuring strategic policy frameworks exist and are combined with effective oversight, coalition building, regulation, attention to system-design and accountability

marginalized groups such as MSM.²² In some countries, business councils on HIV exist and can be harnessed in support of the national HIV response. USAID will help to foster greater sustainability and cooperation through the facilitation of stronger public-private partnerships at the regional and national levels.

Policy Reform is a critical area of emphasis for the USG under the Framework. While policy reform in and of itself is not a discrete focus area under the Framework, both the Framework and the CRSF identify and define key areas for policy intervention. The work in this area will be undertaken in close collaboration with PANCAP and the national authorities and there will be close monitoring of the extent to which supportive policies are established and or enacted in support of the efforts under the goal areas articulated in the Framework, which are also prioritized in the CRSF.

As the lead partner for addressing policy reform under the Framework, USAID plans conduct a policy assessment in collaboration with PANCAP to establish baselines for policy reform efforts. Guidance and support from PANCAP and the countries themselves will be instructive in guiding the USG efforts in this regard, while observing the sovereignty and autonomy of the countries involved under the Framework. In addition the Caribbean Regional PEPFAR team will draw on examples and lessons learned in the area of strengthening service delivery and addressing policy reform from PEPFAR-funded programs in Haiti, Guyana and the DR. Models for the integration of HIV/AIDS testing and counseling, care and treatment into primary care services and strategically addressing policy barriers, are some areas where these country programs may be able to offer guidance and support to the regional program. Additionally, by working through both top-down and bottom-up approaches to reduce stigma and discrimination and eliminate structural barriers limiting MARPs' access to and use of HIV prevention-related services, Framework partners intend to make prevention services more accessible to those most in need without the fear of violence, loss of confidentiality, or discrimination. This objective can be reached by working with national governments and civil society through two parallel strategies: 1) facilitating and supporting activities to make structural changes (legislative, policy, regulatory) at the national levels to reduce stigma and discrimination (S&D) and to ensure confidentiality of services, 2) combating S&D at the community level by building the capacity of leadership and advocacy of NGOs/CBOs working with and/or comprised of MARPs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING:

- 3.1 Improve Financial Management Capacity of National HIV Programs.
- 3.2 Improve Integration and Efficiency of National HIV Partners.
- 3.3 Strengthen national Leadership and governance in HIV programming.

6. Preliminary Performance Management Plan

Under the Partnership Framework, monitoring of progress towards the goals and objectives and targets established is jointly with 14 signatories. It captures USG agency, regional partner, national partner and other partner contributions under the five-year implementation and funding cycles. Since the Plan is a regional plan, the focus is on reaching regional targets as well as national level targets.

²² Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) Achievements, www.pancap.org, October 29, 2009

Regional Indicators that USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean will be monitoring include:

- Number of the targeted population reached with individual and/or small group level preventive interventions that are based on evidence and/or meet the minimum standards required
- Number of MARP reached with individual and/or small group level interventions that are based on evidence and/or meet the minimum standards required by MSM, CSW and DU
- Number of individuals who received Testing and Counseling (T&C) services for HIV and received their test results (by sex and age greater and less than 15)
- Number of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) reached with a minimum package of Prevention with PLHIV (PwP) interventions
- Availability of high HIV/AIDS program monitoring report for the preceding year
- Number of countries with completed health care financing assessments
- Existence of national costed HIV implementation plan
- Domestic and international AIDS spending by categories of financial sources (NASA or NHA)
- Number of countries completing sustainability assessments
- Number of countries with strengthened financial management systems
- Number of countries with completed assessments on the integration and decentralization of HIV/AIDS services and primary health care services
- Existence of structures to develop multisectoral partnerships among public, private, and non-governmental sectors
-

Basic Education indicators to be tracked include:

- Number of adult learners enrolled in USG supported schools or equivalent non-school based settings
- Number of administrators and officials trained

7. Approaches and Funding Across Sub-sectors

Through the Partnership Framework the USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean will receive a significant increase in financial resources to fund the technical assistance articulated. In the first year of the Partnership Framework, agencies will program three years of funding from fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010 for implementation. The funding levels for 2010 total \$23,450,000 of which USAID Barbados and Eastern Caribbean has programmed approximately \$7,052,739 for the activities planned under its purview. These resources will seek to complement and leverage other resources provided in support of both national and regional activities which are funded by the Global Fund and other donor agencies please see Annex 6.GFATM funding for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean Region and Annex 7.Investments by Country and Donor. For the remaining years of the Partnership Framework it is anticipated that resource levels will either remain at the FY 2010 levels or decline to unknown levels. Efforts will be made to ensure that the investments made will support the continuity and sustainability of programs as articulated in the programmatic goals and objectives for USAID supported efforts and those of the Partnership Framework overall.

8. Synergies with Other Donor Programs

To date the Caribbean response to HIV and AIDS at both the regional and national levels has been largely guided and supported by international donors. National governments have contributed in a very limited way to financing their HIV/AIDS programs through their own resources but these allocations have been largely insufficient to respond to the financial, human resources and technical needs of the expanded response in country. As a result, most governments have had to look to external donor funding to support significant portions of their HIV/AIDS budgets. The WHO Global Program on AIDS provided the initial funds and guidance for start up of national HIV/AIDS programs in the 1980s. Later, under PANCAP the USG, the UK Department for Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the French and German governments, UNAIDS, the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) and the Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative (CHAI) have all contributed to funding national and regional efforts to mitigate HIV/AIDS in this region. Presently, the GFATM and the USG are the largest sources of donor funding for HIV/AIDS in the region and under the Framework every effort will be made to plan and leverage USG resources with other donor partners especially the GFATM in the best interest of coordinating inputs in relation to national and regional investments and supports for HIV/AIDS activities.

9. Potential Local Partners

Twelve Caribbean countries are signatory partners to this Partnership Framework: Antigua and Barbuda; the Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Dominica; Grenada; Jamaica; St. Kitts and Nevis; St. Lucia; St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Suriname; and Trinidad and Tobago. 23 Ministries of Health, Ministries of Finance, Ministries of Education, National Defense Forces, National AIDS Commissions, and National HIV/AIDS Programs are all important public sector counterparts under this Framework. Two regional organizations mandated to coordinate the Caribbean HIV and AIDS response at the regional level are also signatory partners: the CARICOM Secretariat, on behalf of PANCAP and the Secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), on behalf of its HIV/AIDS Project Unit (HAPU).

In addition, a host of national, regional, and international non-governmental, civil society, and private sector organizations, many of whom already play an active role in the Caribbean's HIV and AIDS response, are anticipated as non-signatory partners and potential implementers under this Framework. While official signatories are the primary partners under this Framework, other non-signatory organizations may receive funding or technical assistance as implementing partners. The USG may directly fund or provide technical assistance to national and regional NGOs and civil society organizations if such assistance is consistent with the achievement of Partnership Framework goals and with the national strategic plans of Framework partner governments. In addition, the USG seeks to collaborate with other international partners such as The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), the World Bank, the William J. Clinton Foundation (Clinton Foundation), and the PAHO HIV Caribbean Office (PAHO/PHCO) to ensure complementarities of efforts and avoid duplication of activities.

Other USG Partners:

²³ The U.S. Government is developing separate bilateral Partnership Frameworks with the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Haiti. This U.S. - Caribbean Regional Partnership Framework and the subsequent Implementation Plan seek to incorporate the sharing of best practices and technical expertise from HIV and AIDS programs in these three countries with the wider Caribbean region.

Under the leadership of the U.S. Department of State, the following five USG agencies intend to support implementation of this Framework:

- i. U.S. Department of State with Missions to: Bridgetown, Barbados and the OECS; Kingston, Jamaica; Paramaribo, Suriname; Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; Nassau, the Bahamas; and Belmopan, Belize.
- ii. U.S. Agency for International Development with Missions to: Bridgetown, Barbados and the OECS (Eastern Caribbean Program); and Kingston, Jamaica.
- iii. U.S. Department. of Health and Human Services:
 - a. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Caribbean Regional Program based in Bridgetown, Barbados.
 - b. Health Resources and Services Administration based in Rockville, Maryland.
- iv. U.S. Peace Corps Eastern Caribbean Regional Program and Suriname, Belize, and Jamaica Country Programs.
- v. U.S. Department of Defense.

Under this Framework, the United States' senior representative for all six USG agencies working on HIV and AIDS in the Caribbean region is the Chief of Mission of Embassy Bridgetown which is accredited to Barbados and the OECS countries. This individual, along with the U.S. Chiefs of Missions at our Embassies in Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, and Belize, as well as representatives from the USG agencies listed above, will work with the national and regional Caribbean Framework signatory and non-signatory partners to jointly guide and implement the efforts under this framework.

IV. ECONOMIC GROWTH

6. Situation Analysis and Rationale

The six independent countries of the OECS and Barbados are small in size and have open economies, making them highly vulnerable to external market conditions. They are increasingly being challenged by global trade liberalization processes and the need to compete in open markets while at the same time losing their historical preferential markets in sugar and bananas. They all have a growing debt problem which is exacerbated by the global financial crisis. The relatively good economic figures however mask some significant social issues (less so in Barbados) including high levels of poverty in pockets and a growing crime rate over the past five years and especially among youth. Unemployment is high among the youth with a frequent complaint about being unable to find a job and where they exist, the pay is considered low. High levels of unemployment and underemployment have led to the growth of the informal sector and to a reliance on seasonal and low level work. In addition, the growing drug culture is cause for concern as it is seen as an important source of gaining quick wealth especially among youth.

At the same time the countries depend economically on fragile natural resources while their geography exposes them to natural hazards such as hurricanes as well as increased threats from climate change. Two critical themes which are currently under-served are therefore youth development and resilience to climate change which are elaborated on below.

Youth

There are growing trends in the region that point to significant gaps in the ability of the youth population to successfully transition to adult roles as productive workers, family members and citizens. Worrying trends documented by the World Bank (March 2007; November 2007) are the subject of intense discussion among international donors; Caribbean governments and civil society, and a number of USG agencies. These trends include a rise in youth involvement in gang activity and crime, continuing high rates of teen pregnancy and secondary school dropout, and disproportionately high rates of youth unemployment. Increased poverty and resultant involvement in crime in the region is directly linked to low educational attainment especially among males. For example in St. Lucia in a 2005 study (Country Poverty Assessment done for the Caribbean Development Bank) it showed that 51.4% of the population over 15 years of age had no educational certification. At the same time the country had 44% of its youth population being unemployed (World Bank 2005) and crime rate which has been growing at an alarming rate.

High levels of unemployment and underemployment have led to the growth of the informal sector and to a reliance on seasonal and low level work. In addition, the drug culture seems to have become institutionalized and is seen as an important source for common economic activities. The issue is compounded by youth dropping out from completing school and an education system which does not adequately cater to such youth either through preventative measures or through second chance opportunities to complete their education. The risk to societies increase if these young persons become lost to becoming productive assets as they often drift and take up negative behaviors leading in some cases to an involvement in drugs and crime.

USAID's goal is to increase the ability of youth to participate in emerging market employment opportunities, enhance their healthy lifestyles, obtain quality education and training, thereby reducing the allure of involvement in drug trafficking and crime by youth. This goal is in keeping

with the objectives of CARICOM and also addresses some of the areas highlighted in the report of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development.²⁴

There is wide-spread understanding that the availability of a skilled, qualified workforce is a necessary pre-requisite to attracting foreign direct investment and participating successfully in global markets. As a result, future programming will address both the need to better prepare and link youth to private sector employment as well as support a culture of entrepreneurship among youth in the region.

USAID embarked on a pair of two-year pilots focusing on providing workforce development skills including life, technical and vocational skills to youth in each of the six OECS countries. One methodology being used in two of the countries is to use sports as part of the curriculum to build team dynamics among other positive traits. A microenterprise youth initiative started in May 2010 and will run for approximately seventeen months in five countries. This initiative will support the development of business education at the secondary school as well as building entrepreneurial skills among youth. The results of these initiatives will be used to guide longer-term programming arising from this strategy.

Climate Change

The economies and societies of Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean are highly sensitive to the impacts of climate change. These island states are exposed to tropical storms and more recently experienced severe drought conditions with the resultant reduction in potable water and numerous bush fires. Their economies depend heavily on tourism and agriculture, both of which are dependent on favorable weather for their success. Much of the infrastructure is close to the coast and therefore exposed to storm surge and coastal flooding.

Climate change is expected to exacerbate several related stresses. Sea level rise will increase the risk of damage from coastal flooding and storm surge. Valued assets already close to the mean high tide line may become permanently inundated. Higher seas combined with overuse of freshwater supplies may result in saltwater intrusion into aquifers in systems that rely on groundwater. Precipitation patterns are expected to continue the recent trend toward fewer rainy days and more heavy precipitation events. These heavy rainfall events can result in flash flooding where storm water drainage is inadequate or non-existent. Heavy events can also damage plant cover and increase erosion of topsoil and sedimentation of rivers, reservoirs, and coastal areas. Periods between rainfall events may lengthen, and total average rainfall may decline, leading to or exacerbating water scarcity.

Higher temperatures will stress human populations, crops, natural terrestrial habitat, and coastal environments. Fisheries may migrate, and immobile corals may decline. Damage to the natural environment and the uncertainty of the hurricane season may affect tourism. The Caribbean countries are ranked among the most vulnerable states in the world to climate change and even though the severity of the impacts varies from country to country most of the issues raised above are relevant to each of the countries.

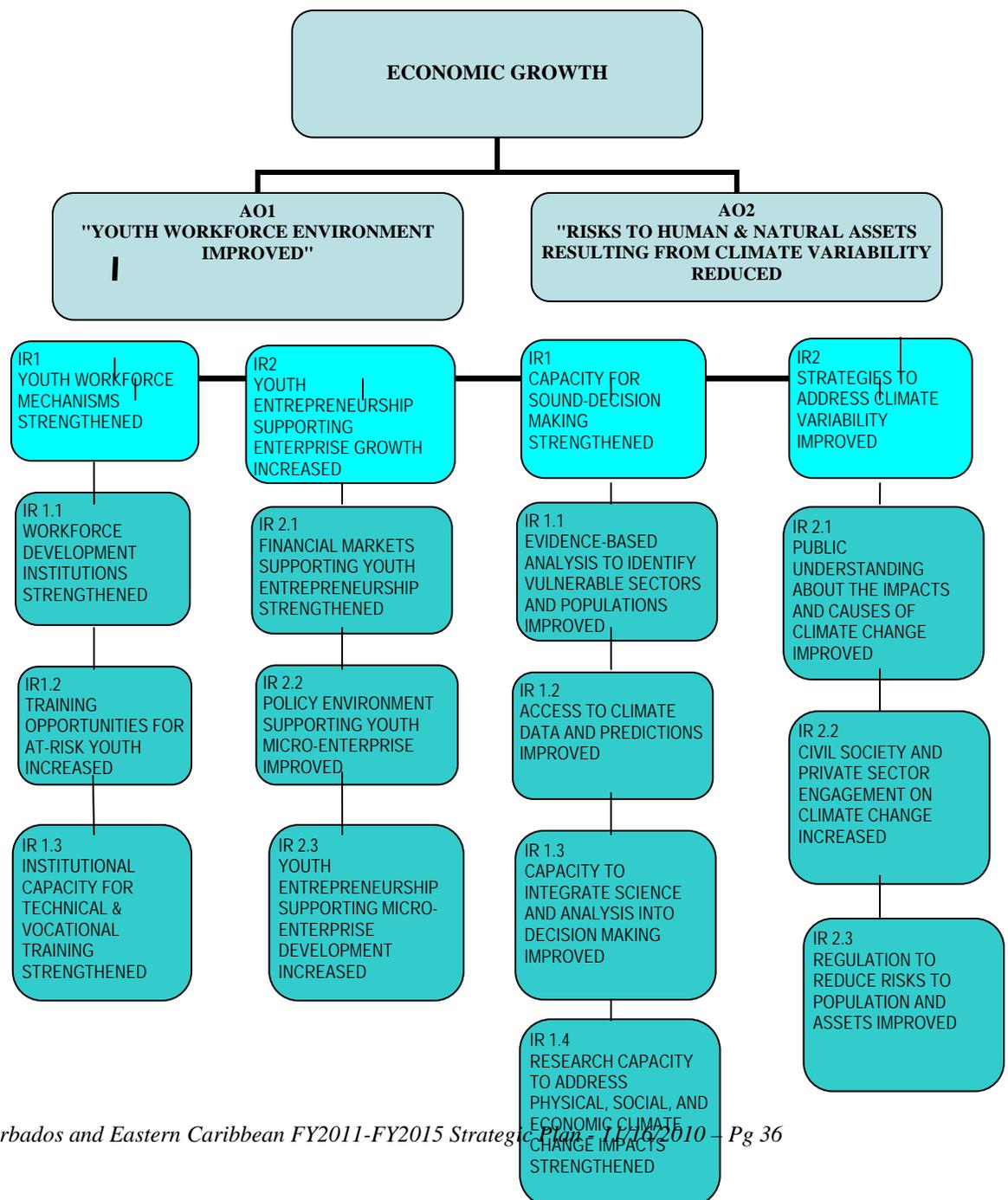
The focus on climate change has been a relatively recent phenomenon for the Caribbean countries despite several past attempts to raise its profile among policy makers and persons in development. The region is currently limited with human capacity who understands the science sufficiently to make appropriate inputs into adaptive measures to mitigate the effects of climate change. USAID

²⁴ “EYE ON THE FUTURE Investing in YOUTH NOW for Tomorrow’s Community” Report of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development January 2010)

therefore in partnership with a broad array of Caribbean counterpart has an opportunity to support the development of appropriate policies, capacity building and the building of successful demonstration models.

USAID’s climate change support for the region will complement overlapping initiatives it previously supported under its biodiversity support to the region. It will focus its resources at least in the first two years of the strategy on adaptation measures in the six OECS countries and Barbados with the possibility for tackling issues related to energy in future years. Based on a recent analysis of regional needs supported by two broad stakeholder workshops held in St. Lucia and Barbados, two critical areas have been identified as requiring special attention. These are coastal zone management and resilience and freshwater resources management. USAID will therefore fund adaptation measures in these areas over the life of the strategy.

6. Results Framework



3. Anticipated Results over the 2011-2015 Strategy Period, Critical Assumptions and U.S. Foreign Assistance Priorities

At the end of the strategy USAID/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean would have supported the development of viable partnerships with existing entities to increase the chances for vulnerable youth becoming productive assets with increased opportunities for employment. The program will support the training 3000 youth and improve their ability to enter the workforce through existing businesses or through business start-ups, it will also support strong private sector participation in the process linking them to influence training programs as well as provide appropriate support to support an increase in absorptive capacity to employ more youth with relevant skills

The youth development component of the strategy supports the US Government's programming targeting critical emerging security concerns in the region, including the spread of youth gangs and violent crime; increasing risk factors among youth (especially males) such as youth unemployment, school drop-out, and disaffection; and youth involvement in drug use and trafficking. The US Congress passed House Resolution 865 that urges the US Government to assist Caribbean nations "in taking specific measures toward reducing crime." The resolution further called on Washington to "increase coordination on policy development and implementation with Caribbean governments to help combat crime and violence in the region. The US Government is also moving to implement the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) which will also target youth delinquency and therefore complement programs developed under the strategy. The region forms part of the "Third Border" with the US and therefore the cost of not doing anything to improve the chances of success of the region's youth will be detrimental to the security of the US.

By 2015, USAID's climate change adaptation program will have built the capacity of regional, national, and local organizations to identify climate risks and design policies and programs to reduce those risks. A key feature of the program will be engagement and empowerment of stakeholders.

The Obama Administration is emphasizing adaptation as part of its renewed commitment to addressing climate change. As part of the Copenhagen Accord, the US and other countries are committing support to particularly vulnerable countries such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean program is consistent with these aims, to ignore the region's vulnerability will leave it with significant risk to cope with the various climate stresses and ultimately weaken its ability to ensure protected resources and a stable environment. Governments in the region are committed to supporting youth and climate changes initiatives and therefore the strategy is built on the conviction that there will be continued commitment by them in these key areas as well as the maintenance of a stable environment for the duration of the program.

4. Strategic Focus

Program Area 4.6: Private Sector Competitiveness

Program Area 4.7: Economic Opportunity

Program Area 4.8: Environment

The focus of USAID's program will be twofold: youth programming through workforce development initiatives under Program Area Private Sector Competitiveness and developing business opportunities under Program Area Economic Opportunity. This focus will support a

reduction in the number of youth at risk to become negative assets to the region at the same time supporting the strengthening of the various economies through business growth. The youth programs will also be supported by targeted interventions in basic education specifically in the areas of numeracy and literacy as well as reducing the drop-out rate of youth from schools which is addressed under Investing in People. USAID's program will also build climate change resilience in the region through adaptation measures under Program Area Environment. Consideration may be given to supporting clean energy initiatives in years 3-5 of the program subject to the needs of the region and the availability of resources.

5. Strategic Subsectors and Illustrative Activities

USAID's resources during the first year will be used to support the development of the five-year program which will benefit from the results of three pilots focusing on workforce development and youth micro-entrepreneurial development. The program will focus on providing appropriate skills to youth including greater sensitization of youth in school to business principles to enhance their transition to work; life skills and skills training which is more closely aligned to the needs of the market; and the strengthening of institutions, particularly non-governmental organizations to deliver programs which are relevant to the market leaving them in a position of strength requiring minimal external support. The program will be implemented under the Sub-Elements (i) Partnership Development; (ii) Workforce Readiness; and (iii) Technical/Vocational Training for Employment.

USAID will use the results of its July 2010 workforce analysis to target opportunities in the microfinance sector supporting youth. The program will work at the policy level including support for necessary reform which could include the development of appropriate legislation and regulations.

USAID has recently launched an eighteen-month initiative ending in 2011 to support the growth of youth-microenterprise in the longer term working through key youth serving institutions in the region. Youth exhibiting an interest in self-employment and who possess the necessary personal qualities to start their own business will be provided with the necessary support to develop their micro-businesses. The chances of others becoming employable will be increased also through the interventions provided. The longer term program under the strategy will continue to support the growth of youth entrepreneurial culture and will have features including business model training leading to the establishment of micro and small businesses with support for access to credit and small research grants provided where appropriate. Assistance will be provided to strengthen business development services to make them more accessible and to increase their sustainability through the provision of inputs with supporting technologies to support micro-scale organizations. USAID will also support a program to increase training opportunities targeting entrepreneurs and will do so working through an appropriate training institution which will have appropriate linkages with other institutions to cover a wider cross-section of the relevant population. This program operates in Barbados as well as the six eastern Caribbean countries.

Climate Change: Two critical areas for program attention are coastal zone management and resilience and freshwater resources management. Each area has been cited as a priority by national governments and by regional organizations and other donors. USAID's climate change program focusing on adaptation leading to greater resilience of the countries will consist of a coordinated set of activities aimed at building capacity to enable local, national and regional actors to identify their risks and begin to address them.

The Climate Change Team in USAID/EGAT's office has developed a methodology for engaging stakeholders in assessments targeting climate vulnerabilities and adaptation options and used the process to support the identification of needs through two stakeholder meetings in the OECS and Barbados. Considerations for programming arising from the assessments include working through at least two components. The Barbados component will focus significantly on coastal resilience but will also work on the management of water resources. The second component will support initiatives in the six countries of the OECS and will also support initiatives targeting freshwater resources and coastal zone management.

Initiatives developed in both jurisdictions will include capacity building measures including policy, legislation and regulatory support; site initiatives possibly including physical restoration of coastlines or watersheds, designing and installing water harvesting systems to support the adaptation process and relevant education or awareness raising campaigns.

6. Approaches and Funding Across Sub-sectors

The youth development objectives will be met through one or two cooperative agreements which will support work with leading entities working on youth issues in the eastern Caribbean. The program will seek to address in a holistic manner a set of inter-related problems affecting youth including poor education, weak employment skills, a virtually non-existent juvenile system, and increasing participation in crime and violence. The program will focus on improving workforce development skills including life skills and technical/vocational skills in addition to providing support both institutionally and directly to youth to support them becoming successful entrepreneurs and having the tools necessary to establish their own businesses. In addition the program will use lessons learned from two workforce development initiatives currently spread in all six of the eastern Caribbean countries as well as the newly started program focusing on youth entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise, to strengthen programming in the region.

The Summit of the Americas' announcement of the new security initiative for the region, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), reaffirms and underscores the Mission's analyses and commitment to supporting youth initiatives. The CBSI which will be implemented on a regional basis will complement the Mission's core youth programs as it will support efforts affecting more risky youth including school leavers who have not finished the requisite schooling to transition into useful jobs, of those already caught in the justice system. The program will complement initiatives by other donors including those by the World Bank, the CIDA, and the EU, relevant coordination mechanisms will be put in place to ensure maximum synergies and efficiencies across donor programs.

Given the negative statistics affecting youth including growing unemployment, high drop-out rates, growing involvement in crime, violence and drugs it will be critical for USAID to maintain its support in the area of youth support for the next five years at a strategic level of approximately \$4-5m/year focusing on workforce development and youth entrepreneurship issues and supporting the private sector where possible to assist in increasing the intake of youth into the sector. At the end of the period it is expected that sufficient capacity would have been built particularly in the partnering and strengthening of the NGO community with the public and private sectors to address youth issues ultimately leaving these organizations in a position of strength with abilities to stand on their own.

The climate change program will be driven by the outcomes of the initial stakeholder meeting and subsequent meetings in both Barbados and the OECS. Arising from these consultations the Mission will support the locally developed initiatives in each jurisdiction. The process could be

assisted through initiatives that strengthen regional human capacity to improve the understanding of climate change, its impact and measures to counter it. The region could also benefit from upgraded systems to improve its early warning capability as well as information gathering methods. The Mission will consider its implementing options based on the assumption that this will be a five year, \$10-\$20 million program.

7. Preliminary Performance Management Plan

Addressing the full range of youth and issues and climate adaptation issues confronting the region are not entirely within USAID's manageable interest. However, initial indicators relevant to these program areas are as follows:

Private Sector Competitiveness

- Number of persons participating in USG-funded workforce development programs
- Number of people gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG funded workforce development programs
- Number of workforce development initiatives created through USG assisted public-private partnerships
- Number of new and improved workforce development policies drafted through USG assistance

Economic Opportunity

- Number of microenterprises participating in USG assisted value chains
- Number of microenterprises receiving business development services from USG assisted sources
- Total number of micro enterprises receiving finance from participating firms in a USG-assisted value chain
- Number of loan guarantees provided
-

Environment

- Number of people with increased adaptive capacity to cope with impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance
- Number of people receiving USG supported training in global climate change including Framework Convention on Climate Change, Greenhouse Gas inventories, mitigation, and adaptation analysis
- Number of laws, policies, agreements or regulations addressing climate change proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance.

8. Synergies with Other Donor Programs

Donor coordination will be a feature of USAID's strategy given the fact that other donors are involved in activities related to youth focusing on a diverse range of risk factors which youth face. Examples include the World Bank's (WB) skills training program in St. Lucia and Grenada; the WB's nursing training program in St. Lucia; the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) expected support for the strengthening/development of community colleges; the Organization of American States (OAS) job skills and business development training; the European Union's (EU) interest in business development training as

well as technical and vocational training for youth; the British government's investment in sports, arts and entertainment programs, community cohesion and law enforcement. Therefore knowledge of their activities and ensuring synergies with activities under this contract is essential. Collaboration with other donors helps leverage resources and capitalizes on synergies in designing, implementing and sustaining activities.

One area of success which USAID will continue to monitor will be that of business development as the growth of businesses and ultimately the expansion of the region's economies will lead to greater opportunities for youth. USAID's focus in this area ended under the last strategy however other donors have continued the process. The EU for example is supporting the development export focused companies through an arrangement with the Caribbean Export Development Agency; in addition they are providing business development support to specific companies through their Economic Diversification Component of the EU Banana Support Program. Support from the EU is geared towards supporting the Economic Partnership Agreement signed with the region over a year ago and which seeks to progressively and asymmetrically remove barriers to trade open and predictable framework for goods and services to move, leading to the promotion of incoming investment. CIDA working in partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) are supporting the continued development of the business climate in the region which is expected to result in business growth and associated job creation. Such work represents a take-off from USAID's previous work with the IFC and World Bank including the development of reform memoranda supporting the improvement of the business climate for each of the six eastern Caribbean states. The recent joint initiative between the IADB and CIDA "Compete Caribbean" is aimed at boosting private sector development and involvement in the region.

Under the auspices of the UNDP, the Donor Committee on Climate Change, Energy, and Environment meets periodically under the chairmanship of the EU. Multilateral and bilateral climate change donor programs in the eastern Caribbean now include the following; The WB's Special Adaptation to Climate Change Project (SPACC) funded through GEF (total budget of \$5.4 million) with executing agency of Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) in Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent; the WB's Pilot Program for Climate Resilience – (PPCR) - (part of Strategic Climate Fund) Caribbean regional program participation which has been approved for Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada; the UNDP's involvement in the Caribbean through GEF funded programs as well as being a part of PPCR planning process and as well as lead UN agency for climate change adaptation efforts; DFID has a broad presence in the Caribbean region and has funded several projects including the multi-donor supported Caribsave initiative. They are also funding development of a Risk Atlas and study on economic impacts of climate change through CCCCC; the IADB has approved funding for a Caribbean Carbon Neutral Tourism Project, as well as a program for the identification/development of financial mechanisms to enhance climate resilience of the tourism sector in the Caribbean; the Caribbean Development Bank has primarily provided disaster management response loans for infrastructure replacement after storm events and they have developed Disaster Management Operational Guidelines with a focus on climate change adaptation; CIDA contributes to multilateral donor programs in the region and is active with PPCR committees; and the OAS has contributed funding to develop storm surge atlas that was produced by the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH).

9. Potential Local Partners

Potential partners for youth work will include:

Non-government organizations
The private sector
Educational institutions
National Government ministries focusing on youth work
The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
International donors

For climate change potential partners will include:

The Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States working with the six countries.
The government of Barbados and its relevant entities including the Coastal Zone Management Unit

Sub-partners could include:

The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH)
The Center for Environmental Resources Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies

V. CROSS-SECTORAL SYNERGIES

USAID/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean needs to retain flexibility within the strategy (and within Assistance Objectives) in order to accommodate CBSI activities e.g Education, juvenile justice reform. LAC recommends the incorporation updates from the CBSI working group into the draft.

This current fiscal year will witness the introduction of a new paradigm for U.S. cooperation with the Caribbean on issues of citizen safety and shared security cooperation between the United States and the countries of the Caribbean through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), bringing to bear increased resources for assorted law enforcement activities and various forms of youth-focused crime prevention. CBSI, a multi-year initiative announced at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, will expand efforts to foster citizen safety in the region by complementing existing programs of the United States and other stakeholders. These programs will address the root causes of crime in the region, which include a lack of economic and educational opportunities, resource-depleted governmental and social institutions, and the need for legal reforms that build the capacity of law enforcement actors and the justice sector. CBSI will use a collaborative, multinational approach involving the nations of CARICOM and will complement Merida and Plan Colombia achievements to create a durable, mature regional structure to address both regional partnership and host nation requirements. Two key components under the CBSI which will benefit USAID's support countries are Basic Education and Juvenile Justice.

Basic Education: Within the past ten years there has been an increased recognition and support for basic education. Education is now being seen as a seamless lifelong process which is a major plank in the success of societies in the region. The challenges faced by the region however relates to expanding access to relevant education and to improving the achievement of students. The potential therefore for Eastern Caribbean youth to lose their way as a result of violence, economic stagnation, and hopelessness is high. A comprehensive education program including support for those who have dropped-out from the system is therefore a necessity for the region's survival.

The provision of “second chance” educational opportunities for persons who have passed through the secondary system but who have not been able to meet the requirements for certification or in some cases are still not functional literate is an area requiring greater focus in the eastern Caribbean. Programs exist throughout the focus countries however their effectiveness as it relates to relevance to the 21st century, modern pedagogy and curriculum. Access to training is also an issue in some countries where for example literacy issues are embedded in rural communities whereas training opportunities are provided in the main towns. Linkages between the communities and the drivers of the economies are also weak and therefore this phenomenon contributes to weak links and a lack of appreciation of what it takes to succeed. USAID support will therefore focus on numeracy and literacy and reducing the risk of youth dropping out from school.

Juvenile Justice: A sound juvenile justice system represents a significant component in along the youth development continuum as it supports the protection of the rights of children/youth gone afoul of the law. The juvenile justice system in the eastern Caribbean is in need of significant reform based on discussions with key actors in the region where they cite weakness in the system and also indicate that they are lacking in resources including technical know-how to address this complex development challenge. There are reports for example of youth languishing in prisons with hardened criminals due to archaic legislation or the lack of facilities to adequately house and rehabilitate them. This and other related shortcomings in the juvenile justice system result of societies being robbed of the potential of youth who, if provided with appropriate means of rehabilitation may otherwise become productive assets in their country with the concomitant reduction in crime and violence.

The USG’s program through USAID will therefore seek to strengthen the region’s juvenile justice system through a regional as well as national approach. Programming will be informed by empirical data and guided by international standards and protocols with a focus on key areas such as (i) community intervention programs; (ii) diversion from Court; (iii) the Juvenile Court system; and (iv) incarceration phase including sentencing with options, are all weak or non-existent in the region.

Human Capacity Building /Gender: The proposed interventions recognize that the region faces special human capacity constraints by their very size. Mobility and emigration further complicate the problem. All Assistance Objectives include elements of capacity building, as well as approaches to address the constraints through efficiency, for example, by using indigenous, regional or sub-regional mechanisms. The strategy recognizes needs for higher-level technical skills, whether to meet requirements of job market, protect the environment or combat HIV/AIDS.

Governance: Weaknesses in the quality of governance in the region is generally directed at government institutions, but governance goes beyond government, involving the interaction between the formal institutions of government and those of civil society. A common thread throughout the proposed program is the interaction between government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

Regional/Bilateral Program Synergies: Our program of activities demonstrates legitimate and complementary regional (horizontal) and bilateral (vertical) dimensions. PEPFAR and CBSI for example, address regional issues through a regional development response with some parallel bilateral projects designed to address shared problems like workforce development, juvenile justice reform and remedial education. These bilaterally implemented projects share a ‘regional’ theme but are designed and implemented consistent with national needs and realities.

VI. CONCLUSION

United States foreign policy in the Eastern Caribbean is to promote the region's ability to build on its strengths by supporting efforts that encourage economic growth, protect its citizens, and develop increased human and institutional capacity in the region.

In keeping with the principles of the Global Engagement Initiative, USAID support through its PEPFAR Regional Partnership Framework, its Economic Growth portfolio juvenile justice and CBSI, all both a 5-year strategic vision for cooperation between the USG, partner governments in the OECS, and others through the provision of technical assistance and support for service delivery, policy reform, and coordinated financial commitments.

Our program reflects country ownership through its alignment with host country strategies and coordination with a broad cross section of stakeholders, including the socially and economically disadvantaged including youth and persons living with HIV/AIDS is primary. Programs further seek to strengthen host country capacity by working through local and regional bodies to strengthen their systems and institutions and help build the capacity of local governments to develop and implement policies, and account to their citizens for performance;

Engagement and participation through a strong multi-sectoral approach to include the participation of civil society, private sector and beneficiaries where appropriate will further help to strengthen Global Engagement principles with the intent of supporting country leadership in engaging all sectors. Towards these ends, the USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean five-year strategy FY2011-FY2015 reflects those key principles as set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action.

VII. ANNEX

- 1. Strategy Annex Budget Table**
- 2. U.S. – Caribbean Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Framework**
- 3. US & Caribbean Regional HIV/AIDS Partnership Framework Implementation Plan**
- 4. U.S. – Caribbean Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Framework Regional Operating Plan**
- 5. Regional Goals, Objectives and Contributions**
- 6. GFATM funding for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean Region**
- 7. Investments by Country and Donor**
- 8. USAID Rapid Youth Assessment in the Eastern Caribbean (2008)**
- 9. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative: A Shared Regional Security Partnership (2010)**
- 10. CARICOM Social and Development Crime Prevention Plan**
- 11. FAA 118/119 Tropical Forests and Biodiversity Assessment: Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia And St. Vincent & The Grenadines (2008)**
- 12. USAID/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean Gender Analysis (2010)**
- 13. USAID Administrator’s Letter to Mission Directors on Global Climate Change**