

USAID GUYANA

Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2004 – 2008



September 2003

The Country Plan for USAID/Guyana was approved by the Agency on February 23, 2004. It sets forth the Agency's policy and strategic direction for assistance to Guyana. Budget data contained in the Country Plan are estimates and do not represent a U.S. government commitment to provide a specific level of funding.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
ADS	Automated Directives System
ACP-EU	Africa-Caribbean Pacific-European Union
AID/W	United States Agency for International Development/Washington
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARV	Anti-retroviral
AR	Annual Report
BCI	Behavioral change interventions
BSS	Behavioral surveillance survey
CAREC	Caribbean Epidemiological Center
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBI	Caribbean Basin Initiative
CBJ	Congressional Budget Justification
CBO	Community-based organizations
CDC	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CITES	Convention on the Illegal Trade of Endangered Species
CSME	Caribbean Single Market Economy
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CVA	Conflict Vulnerability Assessment
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DG	Democracy and Governance
EG	Economic Growth
E-HIPC	Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
ERP	Economic Recovery Program
EU	European Union
FBO	Faith-based organization
FSNPSC	Foreign Service National Personal Services Contractor
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GECOM	Guyana Elections Commission
GFATM	Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GOG	Government of Guyana
GRPA	Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
GUM	Genitourinary medicine
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IR	Intermediate Result
JHU	John Hopkins University
LAC	Latin America & Caribbean
MOH	Ministry of Health
MPP	Mission Performance Plan
MSM	Men who have sex with men
MTCT	Mother to Child Transmission
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAPS	National AIDS Program Secretariat
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPV	Net Present Value
OE	Operating Expenses
OI	Opportunistic infection
OVC	Orphans and other vulnerable children
OYB	Operating Year Budget
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PLWHA	Person Living with HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of mother to child transmission
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPC	Policy and Program Coordination (USAID Bureau of,)
PNC/R	People's National Congress/ Reform
PPP/C	People's Progressive Party/ Civic
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSI	Population Services International
RAC	Regional AIDS Committee
RDC	Regional Democratic Council
RHIS	Routine Health Information System
SO	Strategic Objective
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
TAACS	Technical Advisor in AIDS and Child Survival
TB	Tuberculosis
TBD&S	Technical and Business and Development Services
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDH	United States Direct Hire

US	United States
VAT	Value-added Tax
VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
WTO	World Trade Organization
UNAIDS	United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDH	United States Direct Hire
USG	United States Government
USPSC	United States Personal Services Contractor
VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

Executive Summary

This document contains USAID/Guyana's five-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2004-2008. The CSP is the product of a long process of consultation and strategizing within the Mission itself and with a variety of partners, including sector experts from USAID Washington (AID/W); program and budget staff of USAID's Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (LAC); representatives of USAID's Bureau of Policy and Program Coordination (PPC); representatives of Guyanese government, civil society, and private sector; and representatives of other donors working in Guyana.

Guyana currently faces a plethora of serious development challenges: a declining economy, rising crime and poor security, social malaise, continued out-migration, the specter of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and an inability to consolidate long-hoped-for democratization. At the same time, an important window of opportunity now exists as a result of the Government of Guyana's (GOG) recent commitment to meaningful political and economic reform. The proposed CSP seeks to take advantage of this opportunity to achieve the following:

Strategic Goal: *Broad-based sustainable development in a well-governed and prosperous Guyana*

To achieve this goal, USAID/Guyana has formulated three Strategic Objectives (SOs): HIV/AIDS, Democracy and Governance (DG), and Economic Growth (EG). These SOs were chosen based on an analysis of Guyana's development priorities; United States (U.S.) strategic and humanitarian interests; USAID Agency Goals; regional initiatives; activities of other donors; USAID's experience and comparative advantage in the sector; and the potential for effecting change during the strategy period. In the fight against HIV/AIDS, for example, USAID/Guyana seeks to check the threat this deadly disease poses not only to Guyana, but also to the U.S. and the Latin American and Caribbean regions. In the DG sector, USAID aims to promote greater inclusiveness and transparency in government, while introducing conflict resolution mechanisms to reduce the considerable ethnic tension within Guyanese politics and society. Finally, by fostering much-needed trade and investment, USAID/Guyana proposes to harness Guyana's largely untapped export potential as the catalyst for sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Each SO is supported by a hierarchy of lower-level intermediate results (IRs) which flow from program activities. Performance management plans (PMPs) are provided so that all parties can objectively measure progress toward the larger goal, and seek timely solutions for identified problems.

By building on previous successes and incorporating lessons learned, the CSP aims to optimize the impact of the human, technical, and financial resources the U.S. Government is committing to Guyana. While flexibility has been incorporated to accommodate different funding levels, whichever funding scenarios prevail, the Mission has sufficient human

resources to achieve the Strategic Objectives within each of the three sectors, and contribute to attaining the overall goal.

This is a pivotal and propitious time in Guyana. USAID/Guyana anticipates that the strategy proposed herein will support the government and the people of Guyana in their efforts to overcome the many challenges now facing the country.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Country Overview

Guyana is located on the northeast shoulder of South America on the Atlantic Ocean (see map in Figure 1). It is the only English-speaking country on the continent. Guyana shares extensive borders with Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname. Guyana comprises 215,000 square kilometers. The climate is tropical and the terrain consists mostly of rolling highlands, savannah, and a low coastal plain. The country possesses abundant natural resources of bauxite, gold, diamonds, hardwood timber, shrimp, and fish.

Guyana's population is estimated at 750,000, with an approximately equal number of Guyanese residing overseas, chiefly in the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom (UK), and the Caribbean. Out-migration is primarily a result of limited economic opportunities. There are two predominant ethnic groups: those of East Indian origin (estimated at 42 percent), and those of African origin (estimated at 33 percent). Amerindians represent about 8 percent of the population and the remaining 17 percent is of Chinese, European, and mixed-race descent. The population is 50 percent Christian, 33 percent Hindu, 9 percent Muslim, and 8 percent other.

Guyana is one of the Hemisphere's poorest countries, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$797 in 2002. Roughly 35 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Despite these figures, Guyana is ranked 92/175 countries in the 2002 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Index, which is composed of indicators such as life expectancy, GDP, and literacy. This represents a slight improvement in its ranking over the past two years. Its major exports are sugar, rice, bauxite, and gold.

The coast of Guyana was originally inhabited by Carib and Arawak Amerindians, while the interior was occupied by other Amerindian tribes. In the 17th century, Guyana became a Dutch colony and by 1815 Guyana had become a British possession. During the early colonial period, scores of African slaves were brought to work on plantations. However, when Britain abolished slavery in 1834, the freed Afro-Guyanese settled in urban areas and indentured servants were imported from India to work the sugar plantations under similarly oppressive conditions. These historical forces may have laid the foundation for the ethnic tensions that prevail today.

Guyana achieved independence from Great Britain in 1966. It was ruled by the socialist People's National Congress-Reform (PNC/R) party until 1992. In 1992, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, head of the People's Progressive Party-Civic (PPP/C), was elected president in what is considered the country's first free and fair election since independence. The PPP/C has retained power since that time, though Dr. Jagan died in office in March 1997. Following Dr. Jagan's death, Prime Minister Sam Hinds was interim president until he was succeeded by Dr. Jagan's widow, Mrs. Janet Jagan, in December 1997. Mrs. Jagan resigned in August 1999

because of poor health. Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, previously vice-president, succeeded Mrs. Jagan until national elections in March 2001. At that time, Mr. Jagdeo was elected President for a five-year term. The next national elections are scheduled for 2006.

After decades of poor economic performance under a state-controlled economy, privatization of state-owned enterprises began in the late-1980s. The current government promotes a private sector model for economic growth and welcomes foreign investment, though the present levels of foreign investment are insufficient to stimulate business activity. Growth is principally constrained by infrastructure deficiencies and a dearth of skilled human resources resulting from years of emigration. Guyana is also threatened by an emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic and growing problems with drug use and drug trafficking.

Figure 1: Map of Guyana



B. Strategic Overview

The USAID mission in Guyana was closed in 1985 due to differences between the U.S. Government and the Government of Guyana (GOG) over economic development policies. Nevertheless, the U.S. continued to operate a PL-480 program, and from 1986 to 1992 almost \$43 million in Title I food assistance (wheat) was provided, with counterpart generations programmed to support the development budget. The GOG received a further \$72.7 million in Title I/Section 416(b) assistance from 1993-2002.

After President Burnham died in 1985, his successor, Desmond Hoyte, adopted a more market-oriented approach to economic development, and the development assistance picture began to change. In September 1991, the U.S. forgave \$112.8 million of U.S. bilateral debt through the International Monetary Fund/World Bank Economic Recovery Program (ERP) initiated in 1989. The implementation of further policy reforms encouraged USAID to provide \$1.5 million for elections assistance and another \$1.0 million for debt relief during fiscal year (FY) 1992. In FY 1993, a further \$3.1 million was made available for debt payments, a \$7.0 million PL-480 Title III grant program replaced the previous Title I loan program, and approximately \$1.0 million was provided for training, justice improvement, and business advisory activities.

In October 1991, USAID was authorized to re-establish a mission in Guyana after installation of a freely elected government. The country's first free and fair post-Independence elections were held in 1992, and following the installation of the new government led by President Cheddi Jagan, the Mission opened its doors in 1994. Since that time, U.S. assistance to Guyana has steadily increased.

U.S. foreign policy objectives in the country are described in the U.S. Mission Performance Plan (MPP), and include the following:

- Promoting democracy, human rights, and security;
- Promoting economic prosperity and a free-market economy;
- Promoting Guyanese support for and participation in regional and hemispheric free trade organizations, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA);
- Stemming the flow of narcotics and illegal immigrants to the United States;
- Reducing the threat of HIV/AIDS; and
- Protecting the country's abundant rainforest.

At present, Guyana's economic growth is stagnant; yet, the country's untapped economic potential augurs well for reversing this trend, allowing it to emerge as a force for economic prosperity in the region. Guyana possesses enormous underutilized forestry, mineral, and fishery resources. Poised as it is on the northern coast of South America, it is also uniquely well-positioned to serve as a gateway for trade between North America and Brazil. An all-

weather road between the Brazilian border and Georgetown is being discussed between the two countries, international financial institutions, and private investors. This road will create a variety of new commercial opportunities for local investors, U.S. business, and other foreign investors. With continued U.S. support for private sector advocacy groups and political and economic reform, foreign direct investment can be expected to rise significantly. Guyana can also contribute to U.S. economic prosperity as a future source of petroleum reserves, as the U.S. encourages improved relations between Guyana and Suriname in order to open the way for oil exploration in disputed offshore waters. Finally, to protect one of the planet's richest sources of bio-diversity, it is essential to avert damage to the country's 65,000 square miles of intact tropical rainforest.

To realize its potential, Guyana must make a concerted and sustained effort to address its social, economic, and political problems. Massive outward migration, racial polarization, narcotics trafficking, rising rates of HIV/AIDS, recent rampant crime, poverty, economic stagnation, and unemployment all pose serious challenges to the country's political stability and hopes for economic prosperity. Though the 1992 elections created expectations for change, as yet the government has not delivered the levels of stability, security, and inclusiveness many had hoped would result. There are also external challenges to political stability, as longstanding border disputes with two of its neighbors (Suriname and Venezuela) persist. In addition, because of the large unpopulated border zones it shares with Suriname, Brazil, and Venezuela, Guyana is a convenient conduit for narcotics trafficking, which threatens both internal security and regional stability.

In recent months, the Guyanese government has demonstrated an increased willingness to tackle these problems by adopting a broad program of economic and political reform. These reforms offer an opportunity for the U.S. and other donors to assist in a process that, while apt to experience many fits and starts, is essential if Guyana is to achieve political stability and economic prosperity. USAID will play a lead role in fostering these and other long-term U.S. government interests by assisting Guyana to stabilize and restructure its economy to ensure sustainable growth and reduce dependence on preferential aid and trade regimes. In addition, the U.S. Mission, through both project activities and policy dialogue, will continue to support political reforms that increase citizen participation in decision-making, greater transparency and efficiency in government, and respect for the rule of law. Underlying progress in other sectors is the success of HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation efforts. As seen elsewhere in the world, the unchecked spread of HIV/AIDS threatens all other development efforts. In the context of poor economic conditions and the emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic, emergency food assistance for the poor will also continue to be essential to alleviating human suffering in Guyana.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE ASSISTANCE ENVIRONMENT

A. Economic Background and Trends

Despite a rich natural resource endowment that includes mineral resources, biodiversity, arable land, relatively pristine forest in the hinterland, and a small but well-educated population, Guyana is classified as the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Guyana's economy is primarily resource-based with agriculture, mining, and forestry accounting for more than 50 percent of GDP; manufacturing and services account for only 24 percent, and government services the remainder. Rice and sugar accounted for 22 percent of agricultural output.

With its small population, Guyana's domestic market is too small to generate high rates of growth. Thus, the country has traditionally relied on exports to sustain the economy. Yet, world prices for most of Guyana's export commodities have fallen dramatically in real terms over the last several decades. Guyana's competitiveness has also been eroded: partly by the deterioration of existing infrastructure and the lack of investment in new, more modern facilities, especially transportation, and partly by the emergence of aggressive new competitors for these traditional products, especially from Asia. The long-term decline of the Guyanese economy has been mitigated to some extent by the maintenance of preferential arrangements for some of Guyana's exports, in particular sugar to Europe and rice to the Caribbean. However, these preferences are also being gradually removed under the pressure of international competition and the emergence of a new, more liberal global trading system under the aegis of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Perhaps because of resource constraints and the access it enjoys under the CBI and Africa-Caribbean Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU), Guyana has not fully and aggressively participated in regional efforts to negotiate free trade agreements, despite the fact that it is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the WTO.

Over the years, Guyana has accumulated a heavy external debt burden. In 2002, its external debt was US\$1.2 billion. The original Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) debt relief package that Guyana received was \$440 million in debt service relief or \$256 million in net present value (NPV). In the latter part of 2000, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other donors announced their support for further relief for Guyana under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (E-HIPC). When approved, this debt relief package will save Guyana US\$590 million in principal and debt service over the coming years and is equal to US\$329 million in NPV terms. The combined relief from the original and enhanced HIPC Initiatives will reduce Guyana's outstanding debt in NPV terms by 54 percent. New loan disbursements for Guyana have fallen sharply and, despite debt relief granted by the HIPC Initiatives, Guyana is facing a period of external stringency as net capital inflows show little prospect of increasing anytime soon.

Guyana's recent economic history can be summarized in three distinctive phases:

- *Phase 1.* From independence in 1966 to 1988, “cooperative socialism” was the dominant political philosophy, resulting in state ownership of the economy that accounted for about 80 percent of recorded trade, and 85 percent of total investment. Imprudent economic policy choices combined with high levels of public spending and external borrowing gave rise to significant debt-service commitments, resulting in drastic cutbacks in social services and maintenance of physical infrastructure. Exchange and import controls, combined with an adverse external market environment, fueled the growth of an informal economy, which grew to about 60 percent of GDP, while inflation accelerated to about 100 percent by the late-1980s. In 1988, the economy was bankrupt, unable to qualify for even the most concessionary loans offered by the World Bank.
- 1. *Phase 2.* Beginning in 1989, an ERP was launched with support from the World Bank and the IMF, under the chairmanship of Canada, which coordinated the effort among donor countries. This second phase began with Guyana having a debt/GDP ratio of more than 500 percent and lasted until 1997, when bilateral donors erased more than US\$500 million from a total value of US\$2.1 billion. The ERP was the instrument used to move Guyana away from a state-controlled economy to a market-driven economy. Price controls were eliminated, restrictions on capital flows were removed, import prohibitions were abolished, and tax policy and administration were reformed. With its commodities fetching high prices on the international market, average annual growth of GDP was about 7 percent and public expenditures, poverty levels, and inflation declined, thus offering tremendous encouragement to policymakers that the country was on the right course.
- 2. *Phase 3.* This phase, from 1998 to the present, has been characterized by weak and erratic economic performance, political unrest, crime, falling commodity prices, and limited foreign investment. The average annual GDP growth rate between 1998 and 2002 was 0.7 percent. The fiscal deficit widened from 4.9 percent in 2000 to a budgeted deficit of 13.2 for 2003, primarily a function of high capital expenditure, significant public sector pay awards, large discretionary tax exemptions, and falling prices for major commodity exports.

B. Social and Demographic Trends

Over the past few decades, there has been significant migration of Guyanese to the U.S., UK, Canada, and the Caribbean. This “Guyanese Diaspora” first began in the 1960s under Forbes Burnham’s repressive socialist policies, as political opponents were ridiculed, charged, and sentenced to jail sentences for political crimes. In the 1980s, slow economic progress and the effects of structural adjustments left many no choice but to seek opportunity elsewhere. Low wages, high unemployment, lack of substantial foreign investment, and high crime rates still prompt many to migrate. Today, there are an estimated 700,000 Guyanese living abroad,

roughly 30 percent living in New York alone. Declining fertility rates also contribute to a dwindling population.

Most of the current population (85 percent) lives on Guyana's narrow coastal plain. This includes the capital, Georgetown, which has about one-third of the country's total population. Coastal Guyana has a culture similar to the English-speaking Caribbean, while the interior has more in common with Brazil and Venezuela. The interior is primarily populated by scattered Amerindian (indigenous) communities. As mentioned above, the ethnic composition of the country is estimated at 42 percent East Indian, 33 percent African, 8 percent Amerindian; the remaining 17 percent is of Chinese, European, and mixed-race descent. Traditionally, the Indo-Guyanese have been entrepreneurs and farmers, while Afro-Guyanese have dominated the civil service, military and police forces, nursing, and teaching. Nearly 60 percent of the population is under 25 years of age. About one-third of Guyanese presently live below the poverty line. The rural interior remains extremely impoverished, though pockets of poverty also exist in urban areas, primarily in squatter settlements.

According to the World Bank, "Guyana remains among the Caribbean countries with the lowest indicators of health status. Maternal mortality is 190 per 100,000 live births; infant mortality is 54 per 1000. Malaria is highly endemic and HIV/AIDS is in the stage of a generalized epidemic. The 1999 Living Conditions Survey found that 60 percent of the population had piped water into their yards or building and that 64 percent had electricity. Reported literacy rates are high at 98 percent in 1997. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that this is misleading and that functional illiteracy is widespread. Net enrollment levels are high at the primary school level (97 percent), but lower for secondary education (60 percent)."¹

C. Political Trends

Government

Guyana's history of African slavery, Indian indentured labor, and colonial authoritarianism left independent Guyana with a troubled legacy of conflicting political, economic, cultural, and social interests. During the immediate pre- and post-independence periods, these differences were further manipulated by external powers as a result of geopolitical interests. These historical forces resulted in the emergence of the two dominant political parties, which coalesced primarily along ethnic lines: the Peoples National Congress Reform- PNC/R, allied to the African populace, which held power from 1966-1992; and the Peoples Progressive Party Civic- PPP/C, constituted chiefly by East Indians, which has held power since national elections in 1992. Both major parties rely on ethnic allegiance for electoral support, and this ethnic polarization has resulted in suspicion and antagonism between political parties and accusations of favoritism on the part of whichever party is not currently in power. Racial

¹ *World Bank Country Assistance Strategy*, May 17, 2002.

divisions extend to the grassroots level with civil society organizations, feeble to begin with, tending to form along the same ethnic lines.

These tensions came to a head following the 1997 elections, which were disputed by the PNC/R. In the wake of this controversy, the two major parties signed the Herdmanston Accord in January 1998, following negotiations facilitated by CARICOM. The parties agreed to an outside audit of the 1997 elections, a temporary moratorium on public demonstrations, sustained inter-party dialogue, and the establishment of a Constitutional Reform Commission that included civil society participation, commitment to improved race relations, and avoidance of inflammatory language. Although the inflammatory rhetoric soon resumed and there was a general breakdown in inter-party dialogue, the Constitutional Reform Commission was established and its recommendations were subsequently passed by the National Assembly. In keeping with the Herdmanston Accord, the government carried out new national elections in March 2001. The PPC/C won the presidency with a clear majority in the National Assembly—34 of 65 seats. The other major party, the PNC/R, won 27 seats in the National Assembly, with three minority parties winning a total of four seats.

Over time, tensions between the two parties escalated again, and in February 2002 the PNC/R boycotted the National Assembly over what its leaders described as the PPP/C's failure to implement promised reforms. Extended negotiations between the government and the PNC/R were eventually successful, however, in producing what may be an historic agreement: the signing of a Joint Communiqué between the Government and the PNC/R on May 6, 2003. This Communiqué provides some optimism for the future state of Guyana's political economy, as it has established an agenda with deadlines for achieving a number of key national tasks, including the resumption of the Herdmanston reforms. Without fundamental change, the country's conflicted political life will continue to undermine both the consolidation of democratic institutions and restoration of the economy.

Civil Society

Since the political reforms instituted following the 1997 elections, civil society organizations appear to have gradually increased their influence on political and social conditions in Guyana. In addition to traditional service organizations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, new non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have emerged, which have emphasized national development, political advocacy, and the rights of disadvantaged groups, such as Amerindians, women, children, and prisoners. The effectiveness of these organizations is frequently hampered by limited technical and organizational capacity. In addition, civil society organizations have often tended to form along ethnic lines, though some, such as the Islamic Organization that now comprises all 100 mosques in the country, have overcome this tendency. Perhaps because civil society in Georgetown is dominated by educated urban Afro-Guyanese, the present government at times appears to perceive civil society as a "cover" for the opposition. Whatever the reason, the government has not yet fulfilled certain stated commitments to civil society. For example, the CARICOM charter calls for each member state to appoint a national committee and to engage in parliamentary

debate on civil society. The GOG has not yet done so. Nevertheless, civil society is emerging as an important force in national governance, and may eventually serve an important role in decreasing political polarization—as a buffer between rival political forces and as an instrument for resolving local conflict and influencing public policy.

D. Governance Trends

The National Assembly has adopted the recommendations of the Constitutional Reform Commission regarding the presidency. These recommendations make the president and cabinet members collectively responsible to the National Assembly, and require that they resign if the government is defeated by a majority vote of no confidence in the National Assembly. Under these reforms, the president's ability to dissolve the National Assembly is removed, presidential impeachment is made easier, and the president's ability to abolish public office is removed. In addition, the president is limited to holding no more than two five-year terms. These changes have decreased the concentration of presidential power enshrined in the 1980 constitution. These reforms notwithstanding, the presidency remains a strong center of power, with a highly centralized, top-down administration, with limited inclusion of other groups. In general, ministries are understaffed and plagued with bureaucratic inefficiencies. However, in some areas the central government is remarkably efficient, e.g., elections management, judicial analysis and training, and maintenance of a complex infrastructure. Similarly, provision of basic services is remarkably good. Irrigation ditches and dikes, for example, are maintained and electricity, telephones, and street lighting are generally reliable.

Elections for the National Assembly are based on lists of candidates rather than individuals- a system of indirect voting and proportional representation. The Elections Commission then apportions seats as a percentage of the votes for candidate lists. Party politics thus takes precedence over governance since the members of the National Assembly are subject to the party hierarchy rather than accountable to local voter constituencies. There is no real tradition of a national assembly with oversight roles, standing committees, technical staff, or debate since, historically, Guyanese political parties emerged to win elections rather than to play a strong governing role. In 2000, the National Assembly enacted electoral reforms, which included mandating gender and geographical representation. It also significantly reduced the number of non-elected members of the National Assembly—now limited to six ministers and parliamentary secretaries. The reforms also called for the establishment of a second chamber, an upper house consisting of representatives of each region and civil society. This has not been implemented. On balance, the National Assembly is a relatively weak body serving a powerful presidency.

Guyana's judiciary is not sufficiently independent, although it has been more independent of the executive branch than has the National Assembly. The judiciary has quashed rulings of the executive branch without political interference, yet, in general, the administration of justice is uneven. The length of time in custody for criminals is long and prisoners are not

necessarily credited with time served when their cases are judged. There is some corruption in the judiciary as well as the police. Because of the recent crime wave, law enforcement is in crisis and is a bone of contention for inter-party struggle.

Administration of justice is also plagued by systemic constraints. Judges are underpaid and, at present, there are only seven high court judges out of a full compliment of eleven; only 12 of 21 magistrate slots are filled. Similarly, support offices are severely understaffed. As a result, the courts have a backlog of cases that goes back more than six years. USAID is working with the justice sector to introduce Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) approaches to address the backlog of civil cases.

E. Development Constraints

Despite its natural resource endowment, proximity to North America, moderate climate, and relatively well-educated, skilled workforce, Guyana has not been able to exploit its considerable potential. Economic growth and substantial investment have been impeded by a number of serious constraints, as outlined below.

Small Size and Isolation

With its focus on extraction and primary manufacturing, the greatest weakness of the Guyanese economy is its small size and relative isolation from outside markets, even from those in neighboring countries of South America and the Caribbean. This isolation is primarily a consequence of poor transportation infrastructure, especially the lack of all-weather roads and deep-draught seaports necessary to cheaply transport bulk commodities to land-locked areas. The lack of transportation infrastructure reflects the lack of sufficient cargo volumes to justify the very large investments required. In this sense, Guyana appears to be caught in a low-production/low-investment trap because it is unable to generate initial cargo volumes on its own.

Weak Legal/Regulatory Framework

Another critical weakness of the Guyanese economy is the cumbersome legal and regulatory framework relating to trade and investment. Many critical policies and regulations are unclear, outdated, or simply not in place. This problem is compounded by a relatively inefficient public administration and slow public sector decision-making, in part functions of the country's dwindling professional cadre. The judicial system, on whose integrity economic transactions depend, is also slow and in need of reform to be truly effective and independent. Together these factors have interfered with establishing an investment climate which is credible, stable, secure, and optimistic.

Weak Business Environment

Relatively inexperienced business leadership, weak business culture and institutions, poor management capability, insufficient business cohesion, and feeble market information links and international marketing capabilities characterize Guyana's business landscape. In addition, the family nature of most locally owned businesses creates barriers to collaboration and outside investment. The lack of a strategic view of business and economic growth contributes to the prevalence of corporate failures and the poor international image of many Guyanese businesses.

Deteriorating Infrastructure

Basic infrastructure is crumbling—more so in the hinterlands of the country; this problem is expected to persist, given the ruggedness of the terrain and low investment in infrastructure maintenance. While electricity and water supplies have improved in recent years, these improvements are largely confined to the coast. In addition, these services are still expensive and somewhat unreliable. The transport system is particularly poor, with approximately 160 kilometers of paved highways in disrepair. The lack of external transport links is also a significant impediment to business development—those entities which are able to meet export market stipulations often find that inadequate refrigeration facilities, insufficient cargo space on flights out of Guyana, and irregular shipping schedules negatively impact the efficiency and quality of exports.

Flight of Human Capital

The Guyanese Diaspora has resulted in a “brain drain” of educated professionals. These emigrants span a broad spectrum, from entrepreneurs and financial experts to health care workers and teachers. This loss of human capital undermines the GOG's capacity to provide quality health, education, and social services; impedes government administration and management; and fosters dependence on donors. The private sector also suffers from these human resource constraints, because the limited availability of qualified personnel requires difficult choices between increasing personnel costs (e.g., expatriate staff), decreasing profits, or lowering standards.

HIV/AIDS

Available evidence suggests that HIV/AIDS is a growing problem in Guyana, though the true extent of the problem is unknown because there are no national seroprevalence data and AIDS case reporting data is incomplete. By the end of 2001, the Ministry of Health (MOH) had recorded 2185 cases (cumulative from 1987), though this is believed to be a marked underestimate because of deficiencies in the surveillance system. The epidemic has become generalized, and females are increasingly affected by the disease, especially in the younger age groups. By 2001, females made up 38 percent of all reported AIDS cases and, in the 15-24 age group, significantly more females than males have AIDS. Because of stigma and

discrimination, few Guyanese are willing to be tested for HIV. Heterosexual sex appears to be the primary mode of transmission, though there are no studies on men who have sex with men (MSM), or on health service practices, such as reuse of needles, that facilitate the spread of HIV. In addition, very little is known about the social, cultural, economic, and behavioral determinants of risk in the Guyanese context. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is not only a threat to the nation's health, but also has profound implications for political stability, economic growth, and social development. Left unchecked, HIV/AIDS will reverse social and economic progress and overwhelm an already fragile healthcare system.

Weak Standardization and Certification Systems

Key industries and processes, such as forest operations and industrial production processes, need to be standardized and certified to meet international standards. The public also needs to be educated on these issues. Without careful examination of regulatory matters such as standards for weights and measures, laboratory standards, quality assurance mechanisms, and phyto-sanitary certification of agricultural products, Guyana will not be able to take full advantage of international marketing opportunities.

Commodity Price Fluctuation

Guyana's economy has traditionally been based primarily on agricultural exports and other commodities. Over the past 20 years, Guyana has become even more dependent on agricultural exports; for example, in 1981 agricultural exports represented 22 percent of GDP, but by 2001 they represented 31 percent. During that period, prices for Guyana's principle exports fluctuated wildly, resulting in chronic economic instability. The bauxite market also experienced a long-term global decline and many jobs in this industry have been lost. This economic instability and decline has inevitably spilled over into the social and political realm.

High Degree of Centralization

In Guyana, all key political actors agree with the basic notion that democracy is the legitimate means for contesting politics. However, there are fundamental disagreements regarding the proper role of the state, the party, and the government, as well as a tendency to conflate the three in both discourse and practice. One result of this has been strong executive control, which engenders political exclusion, militates against consensus and compromise, and divorces political actors from popular needs and aspirations. With a tradition of strong executive control, progress in making other branches of the central government more independent is apt to be slow.

Ethnic Divisions

Guyana is deeply polarized along racial/ethnic lines, which affects all aspects of politics and society. This has lead rival political parties to play on the fears and apprehensions of their respective groups to solidify or expand their support. In the past, this has led to social

divisiveness, subordination of development objectives to political goals, government paralysis, and the marginalization of minority groups. Economic sectors are organized along ethnic lines as well, with Indo-Guyanese tending to work in commerce and agriculture and Afro-Guyanese in the public service, professional and manufacturing/mining sectors. These ethnic patterns appear to reinforce political divisions and discourage alliances arising from common business interests. Reversing the established ethnic friction requires sustained commitment by all political parties, in concert with a more vibrant civil society.

F. Development Opportunities

Despite the seemingly overwhelming challenges Guyana faces, there are a number of more encouraging signs which suggest the possibility of checking—and even reversing—the current political stalemate and socio-economic decline.

Government Adoption of Major Economic Policy Reforms

In recent years the GOG has undertaken a number of major economic and legislative reforms aimed at improving the policy and regulatory environment. These include the following:

- Enactment of the Procurement Act, the finalization and tabling of the Small Business and Investment Bills. These bills are aimed at improving the transparency of procurement processes and creating a better environment for small enterprise development and investment respectively;
- Development of a National Trade Policy Strategy and National Trade Capacity Building Program; and
- Privatization of state-owned banks.

The GOG is also working in the area of tax reform with the aim of implementing a value-added tax (VAT) by 2006. These are encouraging and tangible signs that the government is serious about improving the climate for trade and investment, and stimulating entrepreneurialism.

Strategic Development Initiatives

Key strategic development initiatives have been completed in recent years, including a National Development Strategy (NDS) in 1999, negotiation of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PSRP) with the World Bank in 2001, an Extended Economic Adjustment Program with the IMF, participation in the enhanced HIPC debt-reduction initiative, and a partial-scope trade and investment agreement with Brazil. Both the NDS and the PRSP were produced through a non-partisan and participatory process and present a comprehensive and clear vision of national priorities, emphasizing poverty reduction, economic recovery, and improved governance.

Untapped Resources

Unlike many similarly impoverished countries, Guyana has great potential for economic growth because of its small population, large hardwood forests, and diverse mineral and agricultural resources. In addition, the vast and relatively untouched rainforest offers a unique opportunity for developing eco-tourism. These resources provide the basis for sustained economic development if the constraints discussed above are addressed in a strategic and systematic way.

Expanding Economic Ties

In recent years, Guyana has been developing stronger external economic ties, particularly with its CARICOM sister states and other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It has also been increasing its participation in regional, bilateral, and international negotiations, to ensure that issues of concern to Guyana are addressed in these fora. Guyana's support for improving the road from its coast to northern Brazil provides palpable evidence of its efforts to expand regional economic ties. Although this road may have some potentially negative social and environmental consequences, efforts are underway to prevent or mitigate these consequences while capitalizing on the possibilities for invigorating Guyana's economy. Guyana's location on the north Atlantic coast provides an optimal gateway for North American and European goods aimed at the rapidly developing interior of Brazil. The hope is that, over the long-term, sufficient export cargoes will be generated from Brazil to justify the construction and maintenance of a high-quality road and a deepwater port terminal on the Atlantic. If realized, these developments will decrease transport costs for Guyana's imports and its exports, and will significantly increase access to foreign markets.

Infrastructure/Human Resources

The government has privatized water and electricity utilities. Although the foreign investor in the electrical utility recently pulled out, a search is currently underway for another investor. The government has also been engaged in road rehabilitation programs and a national bridge project to repair and upgrade roads and bridges. The GOG will soon embark on a national information and communication technology (ICT) project to encourage the use of ICT throughout the country. Emigration of skilled personnel continues at high levels, and there appears to be no immediate solution to this problem. As a stopgap measure, however, the government has sought to retain and attract critical skills by contracting with both expatriates and nationals on terms which are generally more favorable than those existing in the general public service. The government has also been expending significant amounts of resources released under HIPC to bolster education at all levels.

Standards

With USAID and other donor assistance, the GOG has been working to strengthen the Guyana National Bureau of Standards so that it plays a more integral role on issues related to

standards and market access. They have also been engaged with a broad range of organizations and individuals to increase awareness of sanitary and phyto-sanitary and forest certification issues.

Legal Environment

Several initiatives are currently underway to make the legal environment more transparent, independent, and efficient. With the recent upsurge in violent crime, the GOG, Guyanese citizens and civil society organizations, and the international community have all increased efforts to address the underlying causes of this crime (e.g., poverty, drug trafficking, poorly trained and compensated police officers). In the civil sector, USAID is working with the justice sector to implement ADR mechanisms to accelerate resolution of the backlog of civil cases. ADR mechanisms are also being developed in the commercial sector, with assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Constitutional Reform

Another important area of opportunity lies in the political arena. Since the 1992 elections, Guyana has shown a commitment to democratic reform, though progress in this area has been uneven. Over the past two years, the country has experienced a wave of violent crime and the breakdown in dialogue between the two major parties. However, in recent months there have been encouraging signs that political actors on both sides are serious about working together to advance the country's agenda. Guyana has recently embarked on a process of constitutional reform that has been applauded by both major political parties as an example of constructive change that transcends entrenched, negative patterns of interaction. The return of the PNC/R to the National Assembly offers renewed hope that the constitutional reform process will resume in earnest. The May 6, 2003, Joint Communiqué and the June 12 and 18 follow-up agreements lay out a process whereby grievances will be systematically addressed by a series of parliamentary commissions in which both the PNC/R and the ruling PPP/C will be satisfactorily represented.

Local Government

A process of reform is underway that favors more autonomous and accountable local government, free from the machinations of political parties. Constitutional amendments provide for local government autonomy, including the authority to raise local revenue through taxation. Amendments also provide for a local government commission that will have nationwide jurisdiction over all sections of the local government system. However, the National Assembly has not established this commission because the political parties have yet to agree on the committee structures for the National Assembly. The current electoral system for local government is based on proportional representation and allows political parties and independent groups to compete for local office. Innovative in the Guyanese context, these constitutional reforms now allow individuals, parties, or civic groups to contest local elections. While the modalities of local elections are still in the making, the reform process

presents a special opportunity for donors to assist in the creation of a system free of traditional bloc party conflicts.

Creation of an Elections Commission

The recent creation of a permanent electoral commission, the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), is an important accomplishment for Guyana. The commission is a direct channel for working with political parties and was successful in organizing the 2001 elections. It is presently working toward decentralizing operations to the regional level, and anticipates organizing local elections for 2004.

G. Other Donor Activities and Donor Coordination

About 16 percent of Guyana's budget is financed by donors. The USAID, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) are the leading bilateral donors, with USAID being the largest. Multilateral donors include the World Bank, the IMF, the European Union (EU), CARICOM, and the IDB. United Nations (UN) agencies in Guyana include UNDP, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN AIDS Program (UNAIDS), the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). Donor activities in the areas USAID/Guyana proposes to support under the new CSP are discussed in the context of each strategic objective.

III. PROPOSED COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN

In the following sections, USAID/Guyana details its proposed Country Strategic Plan for the period 2004-2008. The strategy reflects the contributions of the many people directly involved in developing this CSP, but also reflects the input and experience of countless others who contributed in word or deed to assuring a brighter future for Guyana.

A. Methodology

USAID/Guyana and the technical teams that assisted in developing the CSP used a wide variety of methods and resources to assure that the proposed CSP is comprehensive, relevant, and attainable. Resources and methods used include the following:

- Review and evaluation of past programs and policies, including those supported by the GOG, Guyanese civil society and private sector, the U.S. government, and other major actors in Guyana's development history;
- Review of recent information on Guyana's development needs and priorities, as assessed by Guyanese themselves and by international institutions. Particular weight was given to documents such as the NDS and the PRSP, which utilized a broad-based and participatory approach to assessing the country's needs and potential;
- Review of information collected from key informants in all sectors of society and from focus group discussions on selected topics such as HIV/AIDS, democracy and governance, and economic development;
- Evaluation of the stated needs in light of existing and planned programs of the GOG, civil society, the private sector, and other international donors;
- Evaluation of the proposed interventions in light of their potential impact on gender equality, environmental protection, conflict resolution, and human rights;
- Evaluation of Guyana's long-term development needs as they relate to the foreign policy and development priorities of the U.S. government;
- Evaluation of targets of opportunity and, conversely, areas where only limited progress can be expected over the next five years; and
- Assessment of USAID's comparative advantage and worldwide experience in various sectors, as well as potential synergies within and between proposed interventions.

The resulting CSP clearly supports the long-term interests of both the U.S. and of Guyana itself. Although it takes into consideration the many constraints facing Guyana, it also attempts to capitalize on the country's strengths. The CSP takes advantage of existing programs and lessons-learned, and critically assesses the context of the proposed interventions to ensure that, where possible, pitfalls can be avoided. It also establishes realistic assumptions regarding USAID/Guyana's staffing levels and program and operating expenses budgets over the next five years. Implementation of this CSP is planned to start in June 2004 (FY2004)

and end in May 2008 (FY2008). While the CSP becomes effective immediately upon the approval of the LAC Bureau, the time lag between expected approval of the CSP and commencement of its implementation will allow for appropriate phase-out or transition of existing activities.

B. Strategic Plan Summary

The overarching goal of the proposed CSP is as follows:

Broad-based sustainable development in a well-governed and prosperous Guyana

To contribute in a meaningful way to the attainment of this goal, USAID/Guyana has developed the following Strategic Objectives:

- *HIV Transmission Reduced and the Impact of AIDS Mitigated;*
- *Democratic Governance Consolidated; and*
- *Enabling Environment for Sustained Growth of Value-Added Exports Strengthened.*

These Strategic Objectives (SOs) contribute both independently and synergistically to achievement of the Goal. As discussed above, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigating its impact (the HIV/AIDS SO) is not only important to protecting the country's health, it is also fundamental to achieving economic growth and political stability. HIV/AIDS has a negative impact on the economy both because of the increased costs required for treatment and care, and because a generalized epidemic, such as that emerging in Guyana, typically has its most profound effects on the economically productive age groups. HIV/AIDS also severely undermines social and political stability: fear, stigma, and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS exacerbate existing social tensions, and a generation of children must face the catastrophic social, economic, and psychological consequences of seeing their parents, community members, and leaders succumb to a preventable disease.

The Democracy and Governance SO contributes to the Goal by promoting citizen inclusion and greater accountability at all levels of government. Good governance implies a system better able to respond to the needs of its citizens, whether in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS or in everyday matters such as the availability of affordable utilities. This responsiveness, in turn, motivates citizens to become more involved in the affairs of government. A more transparent and responsive government also has a favorable impact on the economic sector, because entrepreneurs are more willing to take risks and invest in an environment in which they trust the government and perceive it as responsive to business needs.

The Economic Growth SO will tap Guyana's considerable potential as an exporter of value-added products by working both internationally and domestically to create favorable conditions for expanding the export market. A healthy export market will create jobs, increase incomes, and spur further investment. Broad-based economic growth will thus contribute to the political stability and social well-being that are the cornerstones of a healthy, prosperous nation.

In addition to the Strategic Objectives discussed above, USAID/Guyana is working with USAID/W and other U.S. government agencies in Guyana to assess the feasibility of undertaking a community policing program (in accordance with USAID guidelines and any applicable exceptions to legal restrictions on such a program), probably as part of the DG SO. In recent months, Guyana has been characterized by an increasingly dangerous security climate, with high rates of violent crime affecting all segments of society. This has hastened out-migration of skilled personnel and dampened investor enthusiasm for the country. The Mission believes that community policing interventions might have an immediate and significant impact on this violence, thus contributing to broader U.S. interests in democracy, regional stability, and free trade.

C. Linkages to the Mission Performance Plan and USAID Goals and Pillars

The goals and objectives proposed in the CSP are closely linked to U.S. strategic and humanitarian interests in Guyana, as outlined in U.S. Embassy's 2005 Mission Performance Plan (MPP). These interests are summarized in the Chief of Mission Statement of the MPP as follows:

- *“U.S. Mission efforts are focused on advancing U.S. strategic goals in the areas of (1) democracy and human rights, (2) regional stability, and (3) economic growth and prosperity.”*
- *“[O]ur greatest humanitarian concern has been Guyana's alarming HIV/AIDS epidemic.”*

The proposed CSP also supports the following three USAID Agency Goals and the associated Agency Pillars:

- Developing broad-based economic growth and agriculture (Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade Pillar);
- Stabilizing world population and protecting human health (Global Health Pillar); and
- Strengthening democracy and good governance (Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Pillar).

D. Linkages to the Joint Department of State/ USAID Strategic Plan

The proposed country strategy supports the Joint USAID/State Strategic Plan (2004-2009) in a number of ways, directly and indirectly. One of the Joint Plan's key priorities, *HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment, and Care* is directly reflected in the Mission's program in HIV/AIDS, which employs the same integrated approach in dealing with AIDS as outlined in the Joint Plan. By educating the most at-risk populations and promoting condom use, USAID/Guyana aims to significantly reduce the rate of transmission of the disease not only within the country but within the region and beyond. (This goal is also found within the Joint Plan's Social and Environmental strategy.) President Bush's PMTCT Initiative and his new Plan for Emergency AIDS Relief, which are incorporated in the Joint Plan, place great emphasis on preventing mother to child transmission and treating OIs, STIs, and HIV/AIDS. These are central activities envisioned in the Mission's HIV strategy as well. USAID/Guyana will also provide home-based and community care to PLWHA to reduce the stigma of HIV/AIDS and enable affected persons to better cope with the disease.

The Mission's Democracy and Governance strategy faithfully reflects one of the Joint Plan's Strategic Goals in Sustainable Development and Global Interests: the promotion of democracy. The Mission proposes to promote democracy in Guyana by emphasizing greater citizen participation in government and more transparent government operations, including those concerning local and national elections, activities which are usually violently contested in Guyana. Assuring elections are open, fair, and transparent will increase trust in government, thereby promoting stability and respect for the rule of law, major themes of the Joint Plan. In addition, a stable Guyana also contributes to regional peace and stability in the Western Hemisphere, another key objective of the Joint Plan.

The Mission's strategy in Economic Growth segues closely with the Joint Plan. Our strategy seeks to improve the climate for Guyana's value added exports and enhance its trade negotiating skills and ability to implement negotiated positions in such mechanisms as the FTAA, CARICOM, and the WTO. The Mission will work closely with the GOG and other U.S. agencies to promote opportunities aimed at expanding trade and investment, including those with U.S. businesses—a key tenet of the Joint Plan. Finally, insofar as value-added exports will depend on developing Guyana's considerable natural resources, the Mission is cognizant that such development must incorporate sound principles of resource management which pose no harm to the oceans or rainforest environments. Promoting responsible stewardship of the environment and safeguarding the world's natural resource heritage is an axiom of the Joint Plan as well.

E. Rationale for Strategic Objective Choices

USAID/Guyana chose the three objectives for its five-year plan because collectively they address the country's most pressing development challenges: the need to spur economic

growth; the challenge of creating truly democratic, transparent, and representative institutions; and the urgent need to address the threat HIV/AIDS poses to all sectors of society. These three objectives were also chosen because they directly respond both to U.S. interests and Guyana's own development priorities and opportunities. Moreover, each Strategic Objective draws on USAID's comparative advantage in these sectors and builds on the experience gained from over a decade of assistance in Guyana.

Without sustained and strategic intervention, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Guyana may soon reach a stage where its impact affects all aspects of Guyanese national life: economic prosperity, political stability, and social well-being. The Universal Framework of Objectives,² is frequently used as a tool for ensuring a comprehensive and multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS SO proposed under this CSP does not cover all areas set forth in this Framework because of limited absorptive, managerial, and technical capacities within the GOG and local partners, and constraints in USAID funding and staffing levels. However, the HIV/AIDS SO was developed from a thorough analysis of the possibilities, needs, and available resources in the sector, and it represents a substantive contribution to fighting HIV/AIDS in Guyana.

Since the 1992 elections, Guyana has struggled to make the transition to democracy. In preparation of the proposed CSP, USAID/Guyana analyzed the present political situation, as well as its historical roots. This analysis suggested that national patterns of ethnic politicization are at the root of an exclusive political system and that this represents the primary challenge to consolidating democratic governance in Guyana. Because progress in reform at the national level has been slow to date, extensive use of DG resources at this level does not promise high returns in contributing to the strategic objective of consolidated democratic governance. Accordingly, USAID will target new opportunities in local government and civil society—which will be linked to strategically identified openings and opportunities at the national level. By continuing work at the national level, particularly in the judiciary and the National Assembly, USAID recognizes that unless the underlying dynamics of Guyana's conflicted national political life are addressed, meaningful reform will not occur at any level of society. By the same token, empowerment of civil society and local government aims to significantly reduce the ethnic polarization of party politics and facilitate greater popular input into decision-making and increase pressure for reform.

Analysis of the economic growth sector indicated that Guyana continues to face significant economic challenges: one-third of its population lives in poverty, national economic growth has stagnated, and international economic conditions have disproportionately affected Guyana's agriculturally-based economy. In addition, the country's population and size are simply too small to stimulate sustained economic growth. To stimulate long-term economic growth, it is important that exports be based not merely on extraction of raw materials but on value-added production. Guyanese exports must become more competitive in terms of quality, service, special characteristics, and price; simply exporting more basic and

² Hunter, S. *Universal Framework of Objectives for HIV/AIDS*. U.S. Agency for International Development. 1997.

undifferentiated commodities will not provide the significant per capita growth that Guyana needs, nor will it be sustainable. Guyana's extensive natural resources offer numerous possibilities for developing a successful export regime. However, this will require improving the conditions for investment and trade. The regulatory environment must be strengthened to establish and enforce the high quality standards required for a successful export market. In addition, Guyana businesses must learn to capitalize on opportunities within existing trade agreements, and support the government to negotiate more favorable terms of trade. Improving the trade and investment environment will require sustained collaboration between government and business.

The following section contains detailed descriptions of the proposed strategies in HIV/AIDS, Democracy and Governance, and Economic Growth. Each of these strategies includes a detailed analysis of the respective sector, including historical information, lessons-learned, and the activities of other partners. This analysis forms the basis for developing the Strategic Objective, defining the intermediate results (IRs) necessary to achieve that objective, suggesting potential activities, and identifying the assumptions that were made in formulating USAID/Guyana's role in achieving the specified objective. Each section also contains a detailed plan for monitoring progress toward the SO and the IRs.

F. Strategic Objective: *HIV Transmission Reduced and the Impact of AIDS Mitigated*

“[F]ighting AIDS on a global scale is a massive and complicated undertaking. Yet this cause is rooted in the simplest of moral duties. When we see this kind of preventable suffering...we must act.”

--U.S. President George
W. Bush, from a speech
given April 29, 2003

Background

In 1999, USAID conducted a rapid assessment of the HIV/AIDS situation in Guyana. The following year USAID launched a special objective to address the problem — *“Improved HIV/AIDS Knowledge and Prevention Strategies.”* Funding for these activities increased from \$200,000 in FY 2000 to \$4,200,000 in FY 2003 (including \$2.5 million for prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT)). The existing strategy has focused on mobilizing and strengthening nine NGOs to expand the response to HIV/AIDS in Guyana, particularly among youth. These NGOs have become increasingly active and proficient in HIV/AIDS prevention, community mobilization, and advocacy activities. In the area of prevention, they have implemented a number of innovative behavior change interventions for different target groups. These groups have increasingly worked collaboratively to increase attention to the problem of HIV/AIDS and to overcome the stigmatization faced by the infected and affected. In addition, they have become lead players in the HIV/AIDS policy arena. During the past year, they made significant contributions to the development of both the Guyana National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2002-2006) and the Guyana proposal to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM). Together they are members of the Guyana Country Coordination Mechanism, which oversees planning, implementation, and evaluation of Global Fund efforts in Guyana. Under the proposed strategy, USAID/Guyana will utilize the newly developed skills of its NGO partners to expand the scope and reach of prevention and care activities.

In 2003, Guyana was one of 14 countries selected to participate in President Bush’s International Mother and Child HIV Prevention Initiative. In recent months USAID and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have worked with the Guyanese MOH and local NGOs to prepare Guyana to expand PMTCT activities from 8 pilot sites to 32 sites nationwide. In 2004, the PMTCT initiative will become a component of the President’s broader Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which will bring significant resources to bear for prevention, care, and support. Under the proposed CSP, USAID/Guyana will utilize these resources to expand its work with both governmental and non-governmental entities. Priority interventions include behavioral and sero-surveillance of HIV/AIDS and associated risk factors, and expanded support for prevention, early detection, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), opportunistic infections (OIs), and HIV/AIDS. Additional

resources will allow the Mission to expand interventions for home-based care (HBC) and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

Analysis of the Problem

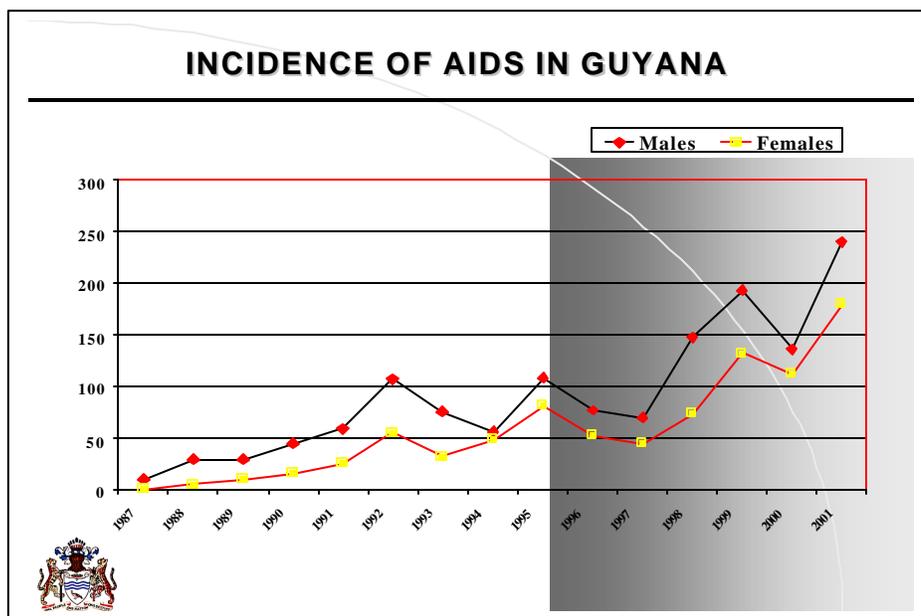
In May 2003, USAID/Guyana undertook an extensive analysis of the HIV/AIDS situation in Guyana and the intra- and inter-sectoral factors affecting the current and projected scope and impact of the epidemic. As will be discussed further below, national seroprevalence data are lacking. However, the design team used available published information, in conjunction with interviews, meetings, and focus group discussions with a variety of stakeholders, to develop the proposed HIV/AIDS strategy. Stakeholder meetings were held with the economic growth and democracy and governance design teams, representatives of government and non-governmental organizations, persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), and bilateral and multilateral donors working in Guyana. Focus group discussions with NGO members were conducted both in Georgetown and in three field locations. Strategic planning meetings were held with the GOG, CDC, PAHO, UNICEF, the Caribbean Epidemiological Center (CAREC), and CIDA.

There are no reliable data on the national prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Guyana. The data that are available suggest considerable variation among regions, with the coastal regions, where most of the population resides, having the highest rates. The evidence suggests that HIV transmission is primarily heterosexual, though anecdotal reports indicate that men who have sex with men (MSM) may also be at high risk. Studies of persons who practice high-risk behaviors indicate that HIV prevalence in these groups has already reached alarming levels. For example, studies of female sex workers in 1997 and 2000 found seroprevalence rates of 45 percent and 31 percent respectively (drawing on different sampling frames and methodologies). MOH data for 2000 indicate HIV prevalence of 15.1 percent for males and 12.0 percent for females among patients at the Genitourinary Medicine clinic (GUM) in Georgetown. In 2001, PAHO reported HIV prevalence rates of 30-41 percent among patients with tuberculosis. Though sex-specific seroprevalence data do not exist, women—and especially young women—represent an increasing proportion of the population with AIDS. Females now make up 38 percent of all reported AIDS cases, and significantly more females than males in the 15-24 age group have AIDS. Data do not exist for male or transvestite sex workers, or MSM.

The MOH AIDS surveillance system indicates that the rate of increase in reported AIDS cases increased significantly between 1997 and 1998, and increased even more sharply between 2000 and 2001, as Figure 2 illustrates. By the end of 2001, almost 2,200 cases (cumulative from start of epidemic) had been officially reported. The number of reported AIDS cases is believed to represent no more than 40 percent of actual cases. Although underreporting may be partly attributed to limitations in diagnosis and surveillance, it appears to be primarily a result of the considerable stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS in Guyana.

This stigma undermines the willingness of Guyanese to be tested for HIV. Delayed diagnosis, in turn, contributes to a mean survival time of just 4.5 months between diagnosis and death.

Figure 2



Source: Ministry of Health, January 2003

In addition to the negative effects of stigma and discrimination, efforts to stem the transmission and impact of HIV/AIDS in Guyana are limited by a variety of social, economic, political, and cultural factors. These include poverty, the status of women, deteriorating health infrastructure, centralized health services, limited availability and utilization of prevention and treatment services, and the out-migration of health care staff.

An emerging threat is the planned upgrade of the road from Georgetown to Brazil, which is expected to become a major transport corridor over the next five to ten years. This will significantly increase traffic through previously isolated communities, facilitating the spread of HIV into the hinterlands, and contributing to cross-border transmission. Although, an opportunity for strong economic development through trade, transport, and tourism exists, a future road stands to increase the risk of an escalated HIV/AIDS epidemic. As seen in other countries, the increase in prostitution and mobile populations, is directly linked to higher HIV/AIDS prevalence. The new HIV/AIDS program supports projects that target at-risk populations through prevention education, behavior-change communications, focused, non-traditional sales points through the condom social marketing program, and through expansion of testing, care, and treatment to the interior regions of Guyana. Currently, baseline studies are being conducted among the miners and prostitutes in rural regions, which will serve as a

guide to program implementation and will serve as the reference for future surveillance results necessary to track a possible changing epidemic.

Other Development Partners

Between 1988 and 2000, the Government of Guyana was the main source of financial support for HIV/AIDS programs. Since then, external funding has surpassed domestic sources of funding by approximately 50 percent. USAID has a close working relationship with the MOH and continues to be the largest source of financial and technical assistance to the national program.

Government of Guyana: The first case of AIDS in Guyana was diagnosed in 1987. A national program to address the problem began to emerge in 1989 with the establishment of the GUM clinic at Georgetown Public Hospital, the National Laboratory for Infectious Disease, the National Transfusion Service, and the National AIDS Program. A National AIDS Committee was also constituted in 1989, supported (beginning in 1992) by a National AIDS Program Secretariat. Key elements of the GOG's current response to the epidemic include:

- A plan to increase access to voluntary counseling and testing (VCT);
- A pilot program—underway in eight sites—to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV;
- AIDS awareness and education training at worksites;
- Targeted public education efforts focused on health care providers, youth, employers, employees, entertainers, and commercial sex workers; and
- Provision of free antiretroviral therapy for HIV-positive patients with two OIs, through the GUM clinic.

Though the MOH has tried to stay abreast of current interventions in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, its programs are hampered by shortages of human and financial resources, poor infrastructure, and prevailing attitudes about HIV/AIDS. Recently, the GOG has made efforts to increase the involvement of other sectors in the fight against HIV/AIDS, but to date this

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USAID will place particular emphasis on encouraging behavior change through NGO activities and condom social marketing programs and expanding VCT and PMTCT services, in conjunction with CDC. In contrast, the GFATM proposal (as it relates to addressing HIV/AIDS) emphasizes expanding access to OI and ARV treatment, initiating home-based care programs, and increasing national and regional capacity in the areas of social support services for PLWHAs, laboratory services, and health information management. Together the two programs will significantly expand Guyana's capacity to effectively respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

USAID Latin America and Caribbean Bureau, Office of Regional Sustainable Development (LAC/RSD) developed and launched the Amazon Malaria Initiative (AMI) in 2001. This initiative is intended to contribute to decreased morbidity and mortality at the national level. This five-year initiative has a budget of approximately two million per year. AMI also complements efforts of Roll Back Malaria (RBM) that is coordinated by PAHO and was launched in the nine Amazon countries in 1999.

Other U.S. Government Agencies: USAID works closely with all U.S. government entities in Guyana to develop a comprehensive and coordinated response to HIV/AIDS. The U.S. Ambassador is an active advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support, and this is reflected in the Embassy's work with the GOG, the private sector, and other partners. USAID and the CDC work closely in all areas to ensure effective coordination of resources and activities. Currently, USAID, CDC, and the MOH are developing a joint plan for HIV/AIDS surveillance and for implementation of PMTCT services. Peace Corps Volunteers provide HIV/AIDS education in schools and communities and the U.S. Department of Labor has recently funded a workplace education program, to be implemented by the International Labor Organization, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and other partners.

Other Donors: USAID also has a close working relationship with other donors working in HIV/AIDS and/or the health sector, including UNICEF, PAHO, the World Bank, the IDB, and bilateral donors. The IDB is supporting health sector reform and decentralization. CIDA recently launched a program focusing on health information systems and laboratory strengthening for STIs in three regions. UNICEF is supporting the development of a curriculum on Family Life Education, through the Ministry of Education, and is evaluating the needs of orphans and others affected by HIV/AIDS. The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is supporting a project targeting commercial sex workers. The World Bank is currently identifying the areas they will support and PAHO and CAREC will continue to provide technical assistance in a variety of areas where gaps exist.

Results to be Achieved

When compared to the trajectories of similar HIV epidemics elsewhere, the epidemiological conditions in Guyana suggest that the country may be poised for rapid spread of HIV through the population. However, with seroprevalence still believed to be below 5 percent, Guyana has a unique opportunity to prevent the emergence of a full-scale epidemic, such as that in sub-Saharan Africa. Accumulated evidence and experience suggest that a strategy which focuses on *reducing risky behaviors among sero-positive persons and highly vulnerable populations* is likely to be most effective in limiting the overall extent and consequences of the epidemic. Implementation of such a strategy requires addressing the variety of individual, social, and environmental factors which affect opportunity, readiness, or willingness of vulnerable populations to change their high-risk behavior. The development hypothesis below addresses these issues in a comprehensive and synergistic fashion.

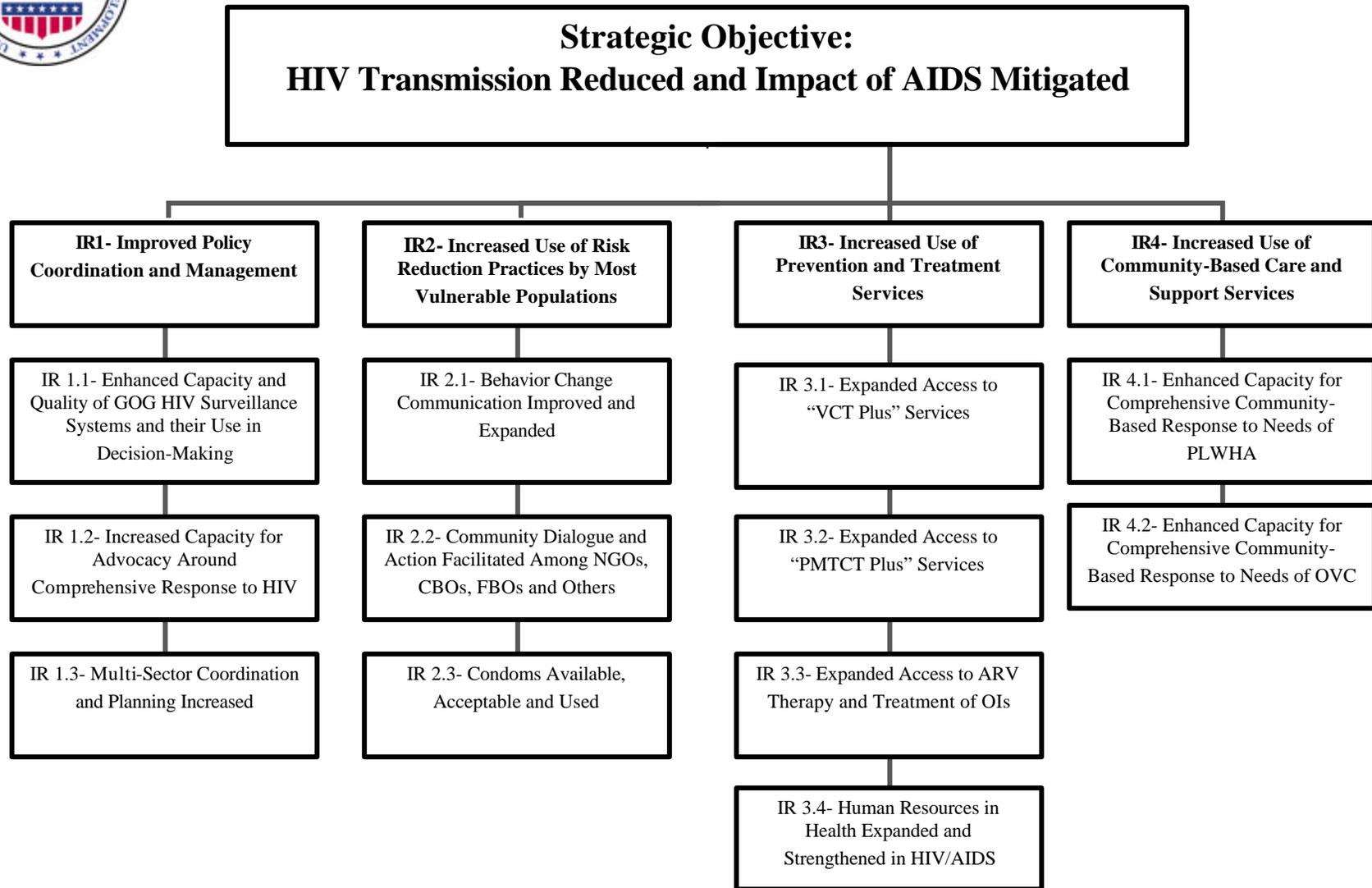
HIV transmission will be reduced and the impact of AIDS mitigated to the extent that the following are achieved:

- *Improved policy coordination and management*
- *Increased use of risk reduction practices by most vulnerable populations*
- *Increased use of prevention and treatment services*
- *Increased use of community-based care and support services*

Drawing on experience in Guyana and elsewhere, USAID/Guyana will undertake a targeted approach designed to reach population groups whose high-risk behaviors and/or special vulnerabilities make them more likely to contract and transmit HIV. Attainment of the larger Strategic Objective requires first achieving a number of smaller results. The Results Framework in Figure 3 shows the relationship between the smaller units of results (IRs and sub-IRs) and the larger SO. The sub-IRs represent packages of results that are considered necessary to achieve the IRs. The Results Framework represents an overall, internally linked development hypothesis among SO, IRs, and sub-IRs, predicated on the critical assumptions discussed later in this section. The Results Framework takes into account USAID's comparative advantages in the sector, USAID/Guyana's manageable interests, and the activities of other donors. If this strategy is successful, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Guyana might still be contained and eventually diminished.



Figure 3- USAID/ Guyana Results Framework for 2004-2008



Intermediate Result (IR) 1: *Improved Policy, Coordination and Management*

The response to HIV/AIDS in Guyana suffers from deficiencies in policy, planning, coordination, and management. USAID proposes to support Guyana's response to the HIV/AIDS crisis by harnessing USAID's strengths in advocacy, multi-sectoral coordination, and second-generation surveillance.

IR1.1: *Enhanced Capacity and Quality of Government of Guyana HIV Surveillance Systems and Their Use in Decision-Making*

First and foremost, efficient and effective implementation of the Guyanese National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS requires reliable data for planning, implementation and monitoring. Under the proposed strategy, USAID will enhance MOH capacity to analyze and use data program evaluation and resource allocation.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance, training, commodities, and field costs to support in-depth formative/ethnographic mapping to identify high-transmission areas, patterns of sexual networking among groups, and access points to at-risk populations.
- Provide technical assistance, training, field costs, and commodities for behavior surveillance surveys (BSS).

IR1.2: *Increased Capacity for Advocacy Around a Comprehensive Response to HIV/AIDS*

Few individuals know their HIV status, and even fewer of those who are HIV infected have openly admitted their status for fear of stigma and discrimination. USAID/Guyana will build on work done under the current strategy to develop local capacity to develop and implement laws, policies, and programs that protect PLWHAs.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance to educate and mobilize community leaders, to undertake activities aimed at decreasing discrimination, decreasing sexual risk-taking, and increasing community participation in HIV/AIDS activities.
- In collaboration with the DG program, provide technical assistance and training to develop laws and policies to protect the rights of PLWHAs.

IR1.3: *Increased Multi-Sector Coordination and Planning*

Capacity must be built at national and regional levels for planning and coordinating multi-sector approaches—both between government ministries and between the public and the private sectors.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance and training aimed at increasing local capacity to facilitate a coordinated and efficient multi-sectoral response.
- In collaboration with the EG program, provide technical assistance, training, and commodities to develop micro-enterprise programs to assist people living with HIV/AIDS and their families to maintain economic self-sufficiency.

Intermediate Result (IR) 2: *Increased Use of Risk-Reduction Practices by Most Vulnerable Populations*

Guyana has a small population and indications are that, although the epidemic has become generalized, prevalence of infection in the wider population is still relatively low. Thus, the most effective means of reducing transmission and containing the spread of HIV is to curb the risky sexual practices of the most vulnerable populations.

IR2.1: *Improved and Expanded Behavior Change Communication*

This intermediate result requires interventions designed to target at-risk populations to change their risky sexual behaviors by promoting of healthy sexual behaviors such as abstinence, mutual fidelity, partner reduction, and 100 percent condom use.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance and training to empower partners (MOH, NGOs, private sector) to develop, implement, and evaluate behavior change interventions.
- Technical assistance, training, and commodity support for condom and VCT social marketing programs.

IR2.2: *Community Dialogue and Action Facilitated Among NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, and Others*

Community participation and mobilization are important to encourage community norms that support safe sex, respect for women, and respect for PLWHAs.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance, training, program support, and commodities to support community mobilization and behavior change interventions for HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support.
- Provide technical assistance and training to encourage coordination, cooperation, and communication among organizations involved in HIV/AIDS.

IR2.3: *Condoms Available, Acceptable, and Used*

A major risk-reduction strategy for many of the most-at-risk populations, including commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men, is the promotion of 100 percent condom use. This strategy also applies to persons who are sexually active outside monogamous relationships.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance and commodity support to develop a brand-specific condom social marketing program designed to appeal to sexually active men and women.
- Technical assistance, training, and commodities for a program of community-based condom distribution, possibly in conjunction with peer education activities.

Intermediate Result (IR) 3: *Increased Use of Prevention and Treatment Services*

President Bush's PMTCT Initiative and his new Plan for Emergency AIDS Relief both place strong emphasis on preventing mother to child transmission and treating OIs, STIs, and HIV/AIDS. To ensure continuity of care, strong linkages between VCT, PMTCT, treatment, and support services are essential. Though these interventions are discussed separately below, wherever possible, they will be integrated at the service delivery level.

IR3.1: *Expanded Access to "VCT Plus" Services*

Voluntary counseling and testing provides an opportunity to promote risk-reduction practices, whether the client ultimately tests positive or negative. VCT services also provide an entry point to care and treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS.

USAID/Guyana will support the expansion of VCT services to increase geographic coverage and accessibility. USAID/Guyana will place high priority on increasing access to "VCT Plus," a comprehensive package of diagnostic and treatment services modeled on those provided through the GUM Clinic.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance, training, and commodities to develop VCT sites for those who do not receive services under the PTMTC programs.
- Provide technical assistance, training, and commodities to NGOs to develop a campaign to facilitate community readiness and create demand for VCT.

IR3.2: *Expanded Access to "PMTCT Plus" Services*

The PMTCT Initiative will expand services through the "PMTCT Plus" program. The President's Initiative will provide full ARV therapy to women and their spouses, based on their health status and the capacity of the MOH to monitor the therapy. Under this IR, USAID/Guyana will support phased implementation of an expanded and upgraded PMTCT Plus program, designed in collaboration with the MOH and CDC.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Eight pilot sites will continue and 12 to 24 new sites will incorporate PMTCT services into the MOH mother and child health (MCH) program.
- PMTCT coverage will be expanded to 32 sites maintained with support from USAID/Guyana and CDC.

IR3.3: *Expanded Access to ARV Therapy and Treatment for OIs*

The VCT Plus and PMTCT Plus programs will significantly expand the number of persons with access to the full range of services for prevention and treatment.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance, training, and program support to develop a training and supervision program for regional or private sector providers.
- Provide technical assistance, training, and commodities to assure quality laboratory services for diagnosis and monitoring of OIs and HIV/AIDS.

IR3.4: *Expanded Human Resources in Health Strengthened in HIV/AIDS*

Throughout the public sector in Guyana there is a critical shortage of skilled personnel, and the effects of this shortage are readily apparent in the health sector. Use of non-health personnel in positions such as VCT counseling is one potential solution; another is use of lower-level health care staff to provide services (e.g., medexs rather than physicians). Both these solutions require extensive investments in training, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation to assure that quality is maintained.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance and training for staff of the National AIDS Program Secretariat, in areas such as program design and monitoring.
- Technical assistance and training for staff of regional AIDS committees (RACs), which would include a regional coordinator for clinical care and a monitoring and evaluation specialist.

Intermediate Result (IR) 4: *Increased Use of Community-Based Care and Support Services*

PLWHAs need family and community support to address coping with the stigma of HIV/AIDS, complying with treatment for AIDS or OIs, and providing home-based care. In addition, PLWHAs and their families have a variety of economic and legal needs. Orphans and vulnerable children affected by AIDS also have psychosocial support needs. USAID/Guyana will support a variety of interventions designed to increase family and community capacity to address the needs of persons with HIV/AIDS.

IR4.1: *Enhanced Capacity for a Comprehensive, Community-Based Response to Needs of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS*

As discussed above, PLWHAs and their families face significant challenges. NGOs and FBOs are well-placed to help meet these challenges by mobilizing community resources for care and support. USAID/Guyana will help local NGOs mobilize community partners who can be trained to provide care and support for PLWHAs and their families. Home-based care will be an important focus for NGO involvement.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide training, technical assistance, and commodities to develop community mobilization, program implementation, and technical skills in NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, and other local groups to provide psychosocial, legal, or economic intervention, care and support to PLWHAs and their families.

- Support training for trainers who can train representatives of CBOs, FBOs, and other groups to help families meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

IR4.2: *Enhanced Capacity for Comprehensive Community-Based Response to Needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs)*

USAID will provide technical assistance to this ministry through an international NGO which has experience in working with orphans and vulnerable children in resource-poor settings.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance to strengthen the local NGO capacity to work with OVCs.
- Technical assistance and training for NGOs to increase parental and community involvement in monitoring ARV therapy adherence among sero-positive children.

Assumptions and Causal Relationships

Successful implementation of the HIV/AIDS strategy depends on a number of critical assumptions, some based on actions of the GOG, and others on USAID actions. Among the most important assumptions are the following:

- Funding levels continue at same or higher levels.
- Other development partners meet their commitments; in this regard, CDC's technical and financial support for the seroprevalence surveys.
- The GOG continues to support and facilitate NGO participation.
- The GOG ensures the quality of ARV drugs and ensures that sufficient ARVs are available to meet the rising demand.
- The MOH and NGOs are able to attract sufficient personnel.

The outcome of Guyana's application to the GFATM may require some adjustments to USAID/Guyana's strategy. If the GFATM proposal is not funded, or if there are significant delays in receiving the funding, USAID may need to fill some of the gaps. If the GFATM proposal is funded, local human resources will be stretched even thinner.

Program Synergies

Successful prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS requires a coordinated response across a variety of sectors. USAID/Guyana will promote this coordination within its own programs, between the various U.S. government agencies working in Guyana, and in the efforts of its partners.

Linkages with Democracy and Governance. With 85 percent of Guyana's population residing along the coast, many AIDS activities will be concentrated in this area, as will

those of USAID's DG and EG programs; many of the partners will also be same. Achieving Intermediate Result 1, "*Increased capacity for advocacy around a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS,*" will require working closely with the Ambassador, Embassy personnel, the DG SO team, and civil society partners to increase citizen response to and advocacy for HIV/AIDS issues. Under the HIV/AIDS SO, USAID/Guyana will promote free and open discussion of HIV/AIDS among Guyana's top political and religious leaders and other influential people such as media and sports stars.

Linkages with Economic Growth. The HIV/AIDS team will also work in close collaboration with the EG team to ensure that Mission efforts in private sector development contribute to assisting PLWHAs and their families to maintain economic self-sufficiency. The EG and HIV SO teams will work closely with the U.S. Department of Labor and the Guyanese Ministry of Labor to introduce, strengthen, and enforce HIV/AIDS nondiscrimination policies in the workplace.

Linkages with Environmental Issues. The road to Brazil is the most obvious area in which HIV/AIDS will link with environmental issues. Engaging communities near the road will be essential to developing plans to avoid both the potential environmental impact and the potential impact of HIV/AIDS on these relatively isolated communities.

Linkages with Gender Issues. Gender issues are addressed throughout the HIV/AIDS SO. All activities will be evaluated in terms of their potential for contributing to gender stereotyping and discrimination. This is particularly important in the context of the expanded PMTCT program, because PMTCT activities will often result in women being identified as HIV-infected before their partners, potentially contributing to domestic violence and other negative consequences for women.

Linkages with Guyana's Health Sector. The strategic objective was developed in close consultation with health sector officials and designed with strong linkages to the health sector to ensure that activities involving service provision are fully integrated and strengthen existing services. Preventing Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) is the first health sector initiative being implemented and will be integrated into MCH services and will work to strengthen overall MCH services. Additionally treatment, surveillance and information system strengthening will be integrated into existing health services and be implemented to strengthen overall systems of the MOH.

Linkages with joint USAID-State Strategic Plan. The HIV/AIDS SPO will support the Joint State/AID Strategic Plan (2004-2009) and contribute to the Strategic Objective to Advance Sustainable Development and Global Interests and more specifically the Performance Goal of Improved global health, including child, maternal, and reproductive health, and the reduction of abortion and disease, especially HIV/AIDS, malaria and Tuberculosis.

Linkages with Other Development Issues. In the broader context of HIV/AIDS in Guyana, USAID will foster discussion and encourage action on systemic issues that will either have

a direct impact on the success of national prevention and mitigation efforts, or conversely, on which HIV/AIDS will impede progress toward national development objectives.

Judging for Results

The Mission recognizes that effective and timely monitoring is critical to both the success of its programs in Guyana and the accountability to its U.S. clients. The Performance Management Plan (PMP) is a management tool that allows the Mission to monitor implementation and adjust its strategy or activities accordingly.

Sustainability

The Mission has developed an HIV strategy that will immediately support an emergency response to the growing HIV epidemic and develop organizations and systems that will be sustainable over the longer term. Through Guyana's Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission, USAID/Guyana will continue to work to strengthen overall Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services of the Government of Guyana. This will require an increased level of human resource capacity and support initially to scale up and expand service nationally, but the maintenance and ongoing implementation of this program will be absorbed into ongoing MCH Services. Through support to selected NGOs, USAID will also expand the number of local organizations that have the institutional strength and technical capacity to continue HIV/AIDS prevention and care efforts beyond the strategy period. This will considerably increase the number of organizations who can join in expanding the response and partner with the government and others. This increased capacity of local NGO's will better enable them to reach most at risk groups and expand care and support services, and also provide these organizations with the necessary administrative and leadership skills that will allow them to attract resources from a variety of sources, including the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

G. Strategic Objective: *Democratic Governance Consolidated*

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

--Margaret Mead

Background

The proposed DG strategy, outlined below, builds on the hard-won accomplishments of the current DG strategy and expands USAID’s DG efforts to encourage greater participation, transparency, and ethnic harmony in the political process. Under the current strategy, USAID has supported a variety of interventions designed to increase the effectiveness of national government.

Activities implemented during the current strategy include the following: institutional strengthening of the

Ministry of Local Government and the Guyana Electoral Commission (GECOM), development of training manuals to increase women’s participation and influence in the political process, and improvements in the justice system, such as improving case flow management, establishing a criminal law review committee, and developing ADR mechanisms. Overall, the current strategy targeted interventions chiefly at the national government level with relatively less emphasis on civil society and citizen participation. Particular successes are namely:

- The Guyana Elections Commission- organizational development focused on roles and reporting relationships being structured around a revised organizational diagram and captured within Human Resources and personnel operations manuals.
- Technical assistance provided to policy makers on electoral systems and local government financing.
- Civic education on local government structure and functions.
- Training of women to increase readiness for, and participation in, local government elections.
- Support for constructive inter-party dialogue on local governance.
- Regularized dialogue between local governments and the community under the “Making the Cities Work” project.
- Community- based NGOs planned and implemented a solid waste management program, which included public clean-ups and awareness-raising campaigns.
- 27 target organizations (Women, Youth & Amerindians) received organizational and advocacy training.
- Support for Guyana Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP) moving toward a national-level campaign, advocating for major revisions in the Amerindian People Act.
- Major milestone achieved when The Laws of Guyana were released to the public in a popularly accessible format (CD-ROM) and capacity built to continuously compile, revise and update the Laws.
- Revised civil rules and criminal procedures formulated.

Given the present strains between the two major political parties at the national level, the proposed strategy will emphasize interventions at the local level, which the Mission's recent sectoral analysis indicates is likely to offer greater impact in achieving the overall DG objective, increasing returns on USAID's investment in this sector.

Analysis of the Problem

In preparation for the development of the new CSP, USAID/Guyana undertook an extensive analysis of the DG sector, which included a Conflict Vulnerability Assessment (CVA; see Pg. 61). Critical information was derived from individual and focus group consultations with representatives from Guyanese public, private and civil society organizations (CSOs), both in Georgetown and in outlying areas. In addition, there was extensive consultation with other major donors in the sector, including the DFID and CIDA.

The sectoral analysis concluded that national patterns of ethnic politicization are at the root of a relatively exclusive political system, and that the current structure and capacity of governmental institutions contribute to political gridlock, poor governance, and the potential for violent confrontation. In fact, the CVA concluded "there is a reasonably high level of likelihood that significant conflict could occur in Guyana in the medium range future (3-10 years) and that it is likely to occur during or immediately after electoral periods."

As discussed earlier, historical forces have created two dominant ethnic groups with a series of grievances against each other and differences in basic political interests. Consequently, high levels of suspicion and antagonism characterize political interaction at the national level, and many political actors seem unable to see beyond the immediate interests of their respective parties. The two major parties often pander to ethnic insecurities, thereby implicitly endorsing and reinforcing longstanding racial stereotypes, and appear to rely on ethnic mobilization (explicit or implicit) for electoral support. Top-down, centralized politics relegates citizens to playing a minor role. Though rank-and-file members serve as the voting base of the two major parties, effective mechanisms to hear and to respond to local needs and opportunities are lacking. Consequently, most average citizens feel helpless and alienated, and skeptical of the capacity of politicians to assist them in meeting the day-to-day challenges posed by Guyana's declining economy and deteriorating social fabric. Yet, each party maintains firm control of its core support precisely because the current political context is fraught with economic and social incentives that discourage breaking with one's ethnic party.

The present structure and capacity of government institutions both compounds and contributes to the negative consequences of ethnic and racial tensions. The executive branch is powerful and overshadows a weak National Assembly, crippled from 2002-2003 by gridlock over constitutional reform, and a judiciary with relatively little independence. Although the media is free, it has not been a strong force for increasing accountability,

inclusiveness, and transparency in government because its members are generally poorly trained in the ethical, analytical and communications skills required for an influential press.

The social consequences of the current political situation are widely evident. Inefficiencies and lack of transparency have been rife in tendering, contracting, legislation drafting, court case management, deeds registry, magistrate courts, traffic police, distribution of house lots, government scholarships, and the assessment and collection of local government rates. This gives rise, in turn, to accusations of corruption and a widespread perception of partisan favoritism in the distribution of state resources, accusations which are difficult to definitively refute in the absence of effective institutional controls and oversight.

Other Development Partners

Ongoing and consistent diplomatic pressure from a variety of governments has had a positive influence in bringing the principal political actors closer to political compromise, and the development of positive solutions to the many challenges facing the country. This pressure has been reinforced by the interventions of the respective development agencies aimed at increasing citizen participation, encouraging ethnic harmony, and improving governance structures and procedures. To further contribute to consolidating democracy in Guyana, other donors have a number of new DG initiatives planned or underway. These activities are summarized here. The IDB is funding a major program to promote public sector reform and transparency. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, in collaboration with CIDA, will implement a program of support to increase institutional capacity in the municipalities. The EU is in the final stages of planning a large program that will assist NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in increasing their own management and sustainability capacity. UNDP has just launched a major initiative aimed at promoting social cohesion. USAID's proposed DG SO links with these efforts but does not duplicate them. In particular, a USAID focus on demand-side advocacy for local government, national inclusion in policy-making, transparency, and reduction of ethno-political violence seem to naturally complement many of the supply-side oriented activities of fellow donors. Ongoing coordination with the donor community ensures that USAID funds will have greater impact.

Results to be Achieved

Without fundamental reform, the country seems poised for continued ethnic conflict, limited citizen participation, and accusations of poor governance and corruption. To overcome these barriers and contribute to the consolidation of democratic governance in Guyana, USAID will emphasize initiatives in local government and civil society, which are linked to strategically identified openings and opportunities at the national level. Accordingly, the development hypothesis of the DG SO is as follows:

Democratic governance will be consolidated in Guyana to the degree that democratic institutions and practices:

- *Institutionalize citizen participation and inclusion;*
- *Make public institutions more transparent and accountable; and*
- *Foster cooperation among all ethnic and marginalized groups, thus reducing vulnerability to ethno-political conflict.*

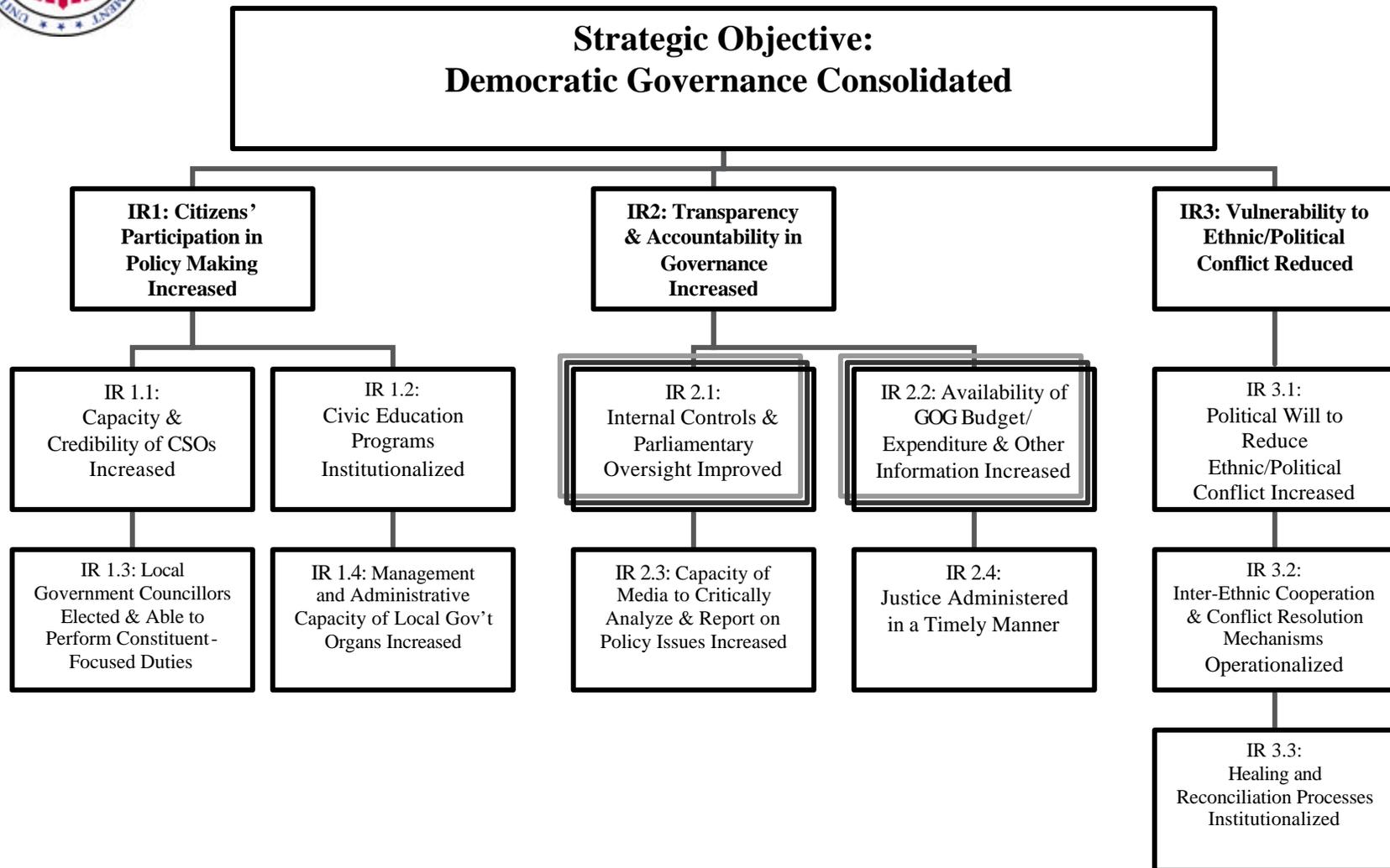
Consolidating democratic governance depends on first achieving a number of smaller results. The Results Framework in Figure 4 shows the relationship between the smaller units of results (IRs, and sub-IRs) and the larger SO. The Results Framework represents an overall, internally linked development hypothesis among SO, IRs and sub-IRs, with both vertical and horizontal logic. The supporting sub-IRs are crafted to form necessary and sufficient packages of results to achieve IRs, but also: 1) take into account activities of several key donors in the sector, and 2) are predicated on the critical assumptions discussed above. USAID's proposed contributions span the entire framework, and are designed to complement the DG activities of other actors in the sector.

A number of specific outcomes are expected by the end of the strategy period in 2008. These include:

- Political parties adopt and practice campaign code of ethical behavior
- Local and national elections are peacefully accepted
- Local government is empowered to provide some services and collect revenue
- Civil society (commissions, advisory groups, associations) regularly provides contributions to policy making at local and national levels of government
- Several local and national CSOs have increased membership, revenue, and lobbying ability
- Citizens have understanding of local and national issues
- ADR is adopted and leads to improved administration of justice
- Media undertakes informed, balanced and objective reporting, investigations, and editorials
- Public records, GOG budgets and contracts are available to parliament, citizens, and CSOs in a timely manner
- A new political space is created that transcends bi-polar nature of current politics



Figure 4- USAID/ Guyana Results Framework for 2004-2008



USAID plays supporting role via policy dialogue, donor/GOG coordination, but does not assume a primary manageable interest

Intermediate Result (IR) 1: *Citizens' Participation in Policy-making Increased*

Democratic governance is partly predicated on the competence of formal institutions and informal practice to support the rights of all citizens to participate in public policy-making. Inclusion and participation are mutually reinforcing: where there are mechanisms and structures that account for the opinions and aspirations of citizens, and where incentives operate for the confident exercise of citizenship, the state and citizens build a productive governance relationship. Measures that shape an accessible “architecture” of civic advocacy and clarify for citizens how they may navigate the public policy arena are likely to be met with genuine citizen interest in making meaningful contributions to the public good, or, at the very least, introducing constructive political discourse. In addition, citizens must have access to information, formal and institutional mechanisms necessary to facilitate inclusion and participation. It is imperative, therefore, that activities be supported to encourage civic input at both organizational and individual levels. The involvement of women and other disadvantaged or marginalized groups require special attention.

IR 1.1: *Capacity and Credibility of Civil Society Organizations Increased*

In order to be considered as partners in development and make meaningful contributions to policy-making at different levels, CSOs will need to increase their capacity and credibility. As part of this process, USAID will emphasize establishing vertical and horizontal networks across CSOs around common interests or projects in order to build social capital between them. CSOs representing women and other disadvantaged or marginalized groups will receive special consideration in program activities. USAID will encourage women's participation in all activities by integrating gender issues in both the design and implementation phases, and by including modules on gender analysis in capacity-building programs and in civic education activities.

Illustrative Approaches

- Training and technical assistance in areas such as policy research and analysis, advocacy, monitoring, strategic planning, and other aspects of CSO functioning.
- Technical assistance, material, training and program support to help CSOs develop networks and institutional fora at community, national and international levels.

IR 1.2: *Civic Education Programs Institutionalized*

For citizens to be able to exercise their rights and responsibilities, they must have access to information. Progress towards democratic consolidation will be marked if the people of Guyana firmly grasp the rights and responsibilities that privilege them to participate in public life. Civic awareness will be made effective by linking them to specific issues or reform efforts. Furthermore, USAID/Guyana plans to institutionalize civic awareness programs by incorporating them into the activities of existing social, political, and community institutions (e.g., schools, CSOs, municipalities, Elections Commission).

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provision of commodity, technical, and material support for civic education programs in schools, local government bodies, community-based organizations and other organizations capable of sustaining such programs.

IR 1.3: *Local Government Councilors Elected and Able to Perform Constituent-Focused Duties*

Elections introduce another measure of accountability, as citizens can periodically vote poor performers out of office. Local Government elections are planned for late-2004. USAID will support the timely and transparent conduct of these elections by continuing high-level policy dialogue and providing training for poll workers and election equipment. Subsequently, newly elected officials and their staff will receive training and technical assistance in a variety of areas.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance, training, and commodity support for the conduct of local government elections - voter registry database, voter awareness campaigns, provision of polling equipment, ballot paper, or registration cards.
- Program support and training for newly elected councilors on consensus building and the role of citizen participation in the policy making and oversight process.

IR 1.4: *Management and Administrative Capacity of Local Government Organs Increased*

Citizens and CSOs will be able to make more meaningful contributions to public policy-making when decision making is decentralized. However, unless local government organs have the management and administrative capacity to respond to and involve citizens in decision making, citizens are not motivated to participate in the process.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance and training in public administration, community planning, financial management, and accounting, tax and revenue generation.
- Provision of commodity and IT support for local government offices.

Intermediate Result (IR) 2: *Transparency and Accountability in Governance Increased*

Increased transparency in systems and procedures helps to establish socio-political conditions for improved democratic governance. With knowledge of government operations, citizens can better advocate their positions, offer their services and expertise, take advantage of government programs, and monitor government performance. Where the media also serves as watchdog, or government institutions provide an oversight function, transparency also serves as a key element of accountability by bringing to light discrepancies and abuses in government operations. Greater timeliness in the justice sector also serves transparency by removing a prime venue for illicit dealings and restoring accountability for illegal activity. Potential activities include training for media and citizen's groups, and long-term capacity-building for citizen groups working in the areas of transparency and accountability.

IR 2.1: *Internal Controls and Parliamentary Oversight Improved*

Where government institutions provide an oversight function, transparency serves as a key element of accountability by bringing to light discrepancies and abuses in government

operations. USAID will seek to improve oversight systems and controls in government and enhance oversight capacity of both local and national public institutions.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical and training assistance to Parliamentary sub-committees, staff, and other relevant bodies.
- Technical assistance for formulation of anti-corruption measures.

IR 2.2: *Availability of GOG Budget/Expenditures and Other Information Increased*

With information on government systems and procedures, including financial regulations, national budgeting, reporting and expenditure controls, revenue sources, etc. citizens are more likely to trust and be willing and motivated to work with their governments, both local and national. Accordingly, USAID proposes training, technical and commodity assistance in information technology as part of a plan to make electronic information available to the public on budgets and expenditure reports.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Commodities and technical assistance to develop a website for and public education materials on government financial regulations, budgeting, procurement, notice publication and other advertisements.
- Establishment of FOIA law.

IR 2.3: *Capacity of Media to Critically Analyze and Report on Policy Issues Increased*

In an open and democratic society, the media serves a watchdog function. A competent media provides citizens with another source of information with which to stay abreast of issues and on which to formulate informed input into policy-making. USAID will work with Embassy public diplomacy staff and programs to develop a more mature and responsible media.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Training for journalists in research and analysis, investigative reporting, opinion polling, and journalistic ethics.
- Technical assistance, training and program support for setting up TV/radio talk shows, news roundups, debates, and other formats to inform the public of issues and allow the expression of a wide range of opinions on them.

IR 2.4: *Justice Administered in a Timely Manner*

Greater timeliness in the justice sector will also serve transparency by removing a major venue for illicit dealings and restoring accountability for illegal activity. USAID intends to focus specifically on building on progress under the current strategy in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), which aims at improving both the timeliness and fairness of judicial administration.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Training for professionals in judicial administration to increase efficiencies in court registry, case management, and judicial transcripts archiving.
- Training for civil case mediators, judges, and the Bar Association.

Intermediate Result (IR) 3: *Vulnerability to Ethnic-Political Conflict Reduced*

Ethno-political conflict through the use of ethnicity by politicians to divide citizens can threaten the consolidation of democratic governance in Guyana and also result in a humanitarian crisis that imperils the very integrity of the nation. Thus, it is imperative that activities be undertaken to eliminate the use of ethnicity in political discourse and promote greater social tolerance and harmony.

IR 3.1: *Political Will to Reduce Ethnic Conflict Increased*

Up to now, the political leadership of both major parties seems hesitant to take a strong stand against ethnically-driven politics. However, to gain the social and economic benefits of racial harmony and societal stability, the political actors themselves must demonstrate the will to resolve ethno-political conflict, and focus on national issues of concern to all the country's citizens. USAID will support this process by exposing political leaders to more constructive alternatives.

Illustrative Approaches:

- High-level diplomatic policy dialogue aimed at increasing racial and ethnic harmony.
- Study tours for senior officials of the government and opposition and exchange visits of prominent, influential religious, political, or business leaders.

IR 3.2: *Inter-Ethnic Cooperation and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms Operationalized*

Mechanisms and institutions to respond to conflict must be created, reenergized, and supported at the national, regional, and community levels.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Training in ADR, local conflict mediation, and race relations for community based initiatives, police, etc
- Workshops for media and other groups to promote tolerance and ethical conduct in professional activities.

IR 3.3: *Healing and Reconciliation Process Institutionalized*

Some iteration of Appreciative Inquiry methods in both national and local settings seems appropriate in Guyana. This should be combined with on-going inter-ethnic community development to demonstrate the mutual dependence of all ethnic groups in Guyana. USAID will support the nascent Ethnic Relations Commission to implement this important activity.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Training, commodity and technical assistance for the Ethnic Relations Commission.
- Support local level reconciliation activities such as sporting events, clubs, community, youth, student events, or religious ecumenism.

Assumptions and Causal Relationships

To some degree, the grassroots emphasis of the proposed DG strategy will minimize USAID dependence on GOG actions to achieve a number of sub-IR results. This relative independence, notwithstanding USAID's ability to meet the overall Strategic Objective—as well as IR objectives—will ultimately depend on the GOG's commitment to true democratic reform.

Program Synergies

The results to be achieved under the DG SO combine in a synergistic fashion with each other and with those of the health and economic growth SOs to achieve USAID/Guyana's Strategic Goal of broad-based economic growth and good governance in Guyana.

Judging for Results

The PMP provides SO indicators, baselines and targets that will be used to monitor achievement of intermediate results toward the SO. While the plan is virtually complete, it will be refined during the first year of the program, in collaboration with the USAID Program Officer supporting Guyana, the USAID Desk Officer for Guyana, and implementing partners.

Sustainability

An effective strategy for building sustainability into DG interventions is necessarily based on a realistic assessment of the capacity of the GOG and other beneficiaries to support activities beyond the life of the project. This is to say that, at this point in time, it is unrealistic to expect many DG project interventions to be sustainable in a HIPC-status country such as Guyana. Some degree of donor dependency will almost certainly continue until Guyana's economy is stabilized, and the GOG comes to recognize the importance of supporting certain DG activities over the long term. The latter is, in itself, part of the democratic reform process and will be an important measure of success of the DG program.

Financial and political limitations notwithstanding, several strategies will be incorporated into DG project activities to maximize, to the extent possible, sustainability. Wherever

institutional training is conducted, for example, USAID will carefully monitor personnel retention rates over the long term to ensure those receiving training are making an overall impact within the target institution. As some functions become decentralized to local governments, USAID intends to assist local governments become more self-sufficient by making fiscal strengthening of local government entities a priority. In activities which offer a potential to be self-sustaining, such as civic education, USAID will tap into existing facilities (such as public schools and CSOs) to create permanent education programs. CSO capacity building will generally target indigenous organizations that have already demonstrated an ability to generate revenue and build membership. CSO sustainability can also be enhanced by developing synergies with other programs, especially the EG SO, so that, for example, an institutionally strengthened Wood Producers Association can simultaneously function as a vehicle for environmental awareness programs. Finally, USAID will pursue policy dialogue with the senior officials on a regular basis to urge greater GOG responsibility, creativity, and self-reliance in developing long term solutions to their development needs.

H. Strategic Objective: *Enabling Environment for Sustained Growth of Valued-Added Exports Strengthened*

“The achievement of sustainable growth is predicated on prudent economic policy and management, including the introduction of far-reaching reforms to enhance the business environment...and development of strategic investments in the infrastructure sector to complement rapid private sector development.”

*Guyana National
Development Strategy,
2001-2010*

Background

One of the major objectives of USAID’s current economic growth program is to create an enabling environment conducive to private sector investment. In keeping with this objective, four principal areas have been the focus of this program: conducting seminars and workshops on important economic policies and issues; supporting policy, institutional, and regulatory reform; providing technical assistance to strengthen policy-making governmental agencies; and supporting private sector organizations and promoting exports of non-traditional products. Among the most significant achievements was drafting and tabling in the National Assembly of the Investment and Small Business Bills, two pieces of legislation that USAID helped develop in collaboration with the GOG and other stakeholders. USAID’s work with private firms and private sector organizations improved their management and advocacy capabilities and increased their export competitiveness. Some other notable achievements of the previous strategy are:

- Institutional strengthening support to the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-INVEST) and Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS).
- GO-INVEST has improved its capacity to deliver services to private investors and exporters.
- Technical assistance and training provided to 12 private sector organizations (PSOs).
- Development of strategic plans
- Advocacy campaigns on local and national -level concerns
- Training and technical assistance for the Institute for Private Enterprise Development (IPED) resulting in:
 - Delinquency rate for micro-loans reduced from 6.5% in 1999 to 4.3% in 2001
 - Individuals receiving loans increasing from 2,426 in 1999 to 2,600 in 2001.

The new economic growth strategy aims to build on these accomplishments. USAID’s efforts to strengthen the private sector and improve the policy environment for business

and investment will continue, but with a specific focus on improving the climate for value-added exports.

Analysis of the Problem

The new EG strategy is based on an extensive analysis of the sector, which included document review and stakeholder consultations. Stakeholders included representatives of the GOG, private sector, other donors, and civil society.

Guyana's overriding development objective, as outlined in both the PRSP and the NDS, is to increase incomes across social levels and reduce the level and incidence of poverty. Increasing jobs and earnings will require stimulating business activity and productivity. However, with a population of only 750,000, Guyana's domestic market is too small to provide a viable base for long-term growth. Therefore, the chief strategy available for creating sustainable growth lies in the development of value-added, non-traditional exports. Successful expansion of exports will require strengthening the domestic environment for exports, with particular emphasis on improving policies and stimulating greater entrepreneurialism in Guyana. In addition, Guyanese exports will need to be competitive in terms of quality, service, special characteristics, and price. Export growth will need to take place over the long-term and be sustainable in order to increase revenues and reduce poverty.

Guyana's trade environment is relatively weak. It is a small economy within the Caribbean Common Market, and lacks sufficient analytical or negotiating capability to influence trade agreements and negotiations. Yet these agreements directly affect Guyana's ability to export certain products, and could even pressure Guyana into increased export competition. Most of those who will be affected by these agreements--including individuals, business owners, representatives of civil society, and even many government institutions--are unaware of the effect that existing and pending trade agreements will have on world markets and competition and do not fully grasp the responsibilities and consequences emanating from these agreements. Nor are they fully aware of the opportunities offered by the agreements. Although Guyana is a member of CARICOM and other regional economic frameworks, it has thus far not done enough to ensure that it maximizes its benefits from these arrangements, or to ensure that its own priorities are reflected in the country's and region's negotiating positions. This is more a lost opportunity than a lack of commitment. Guyana needs to take advantage of the opportunities presented by these agreements and the negotiating process itself. The GOG must also do more to improve the incentives for foreign investment and trade. Guyana's government and public sector must act in concert to provide Guyana with world-class institutions and services that create an environment for business and investment that is low-risk and offers profitability incentives for meeting or exceeding customer expectations.

Another weakness in the economic sphere is the competitiveness and reliability of Guyanese private sector. Traditionally, Guyana has exported basic commodities that have not been competitive on the international market without preferential arrangements. With the emerging world trade order, the prices of these undifferentiated commodities will continue to decline. Moreover, many of Guyana's businesses are either unknown in the international market place or, worse, have a reputation for poor quality, delivery delays, and lack of respect for contractual arrangements. This image is the polar opposite of what is needed for an export-oriented economy based on competitive factors other than cheap price.

Nevertheless, some of Guyana's exporters of both unprocessed and processed products have been successful in achieving high quality and meeting strict standards. Guyana's tourism industry also offers an example of an internationally competitive, differentiated service. These exporters of goods and services demonstrate that in selective sectors Guyanese businesses can be successful in targeting markets with products that are attractive in terms of quality, service, special characteristics, and price. Simply exporting more basic commodities will not provide the significant per capita growth that Guyana needs, nor will it be sustainable because it bases competition solely on price, providing no incentive to improve quality, increase productivity, or utilize resources in a sustainable manner.

To increase their competitiveness, Guyana's business community must devise ways of identifying and exploiting promising markets. They must create market niches by identifying services and products for which customers are willing to pay a premium, and produce and export products and services that meet international standards. Exports must therefore become specialized and increasingly value-added in nature. Developing quality and differentiated market focus, will allow Guyana to seek premium prices. In turn, it will provide incentives for meeting international criteria for environmental stewardship, fair trade, and quality.

Under the new CSP, USAID/Guyana will support interventions designed to address the two key constraints to improving the environment for sustained growth of value-added exports. On the "demand" side, Guyana needs to strengthen "rules-based" incentive structures for attracting investment to Guyana and increase its participation in trade-led economic growth. On the "supply" side, Guyanese businesses need to strengthen their capacity to play by the internationally-defined "rules of trade" so that export-led sectors, industries, and firms can competitively produce and market their goods and services.

Other Development Partners

There are several important partners in the economic growth sector. CARICOM has a strong regional program, which emphasizes regional market integration, business competitiveness, and effective negotiation of international trade agreements. CARICOM offers several resources to a Guyana program: (1) central technical resources and bodies,

e.g., the regional organization for standards and quality, Regional Negotiating Machinery (RNM); (2) country-specific interventions; and (3) funded technical resources. The IDB is considering a Trade Sector Support Program but will tailor its efforts to assure there is no duplication of USAID activities. The EU has recently provided assistance to the Ministry of Trade to build capacity for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) cooperation in trade matters. DFID provides technical assistance in economics to key ministries and has provided support for the development of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). CIDA is providing extensive technical assistance to increase industrial competitiveness. USAID will liaise with these programs to maximize use of resources and avoid duplication of activities.

Results to be Achieved

To achieve broad-based and sustainable prosperity, Guyana must develop and capitalize on opportunities in international trade. Thus, the development hypothesis of the EG SO is as follows:

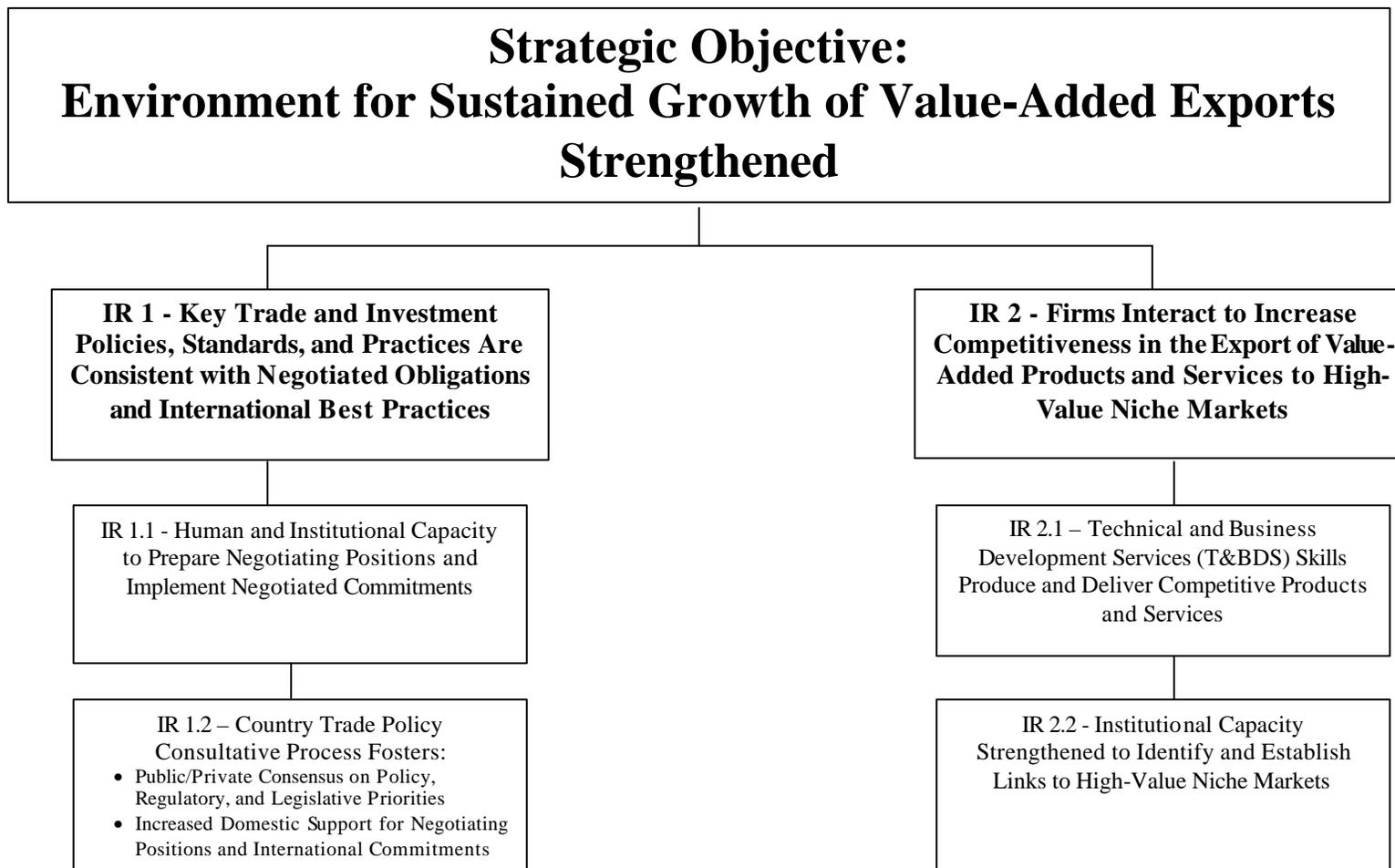
The local environment for sustained growth of value-added exports will be strengthened by ensuring the following:

- *Key trade and investment policies, standards, and practices are consistent with negotiated obligations and international best practices.*
- *Firms increase competitiveness in the export of value-added products and services to high-value niche markets.*

The Mission's activities under the proposed CSP are designed to achieve the Strategic Objective of "environment for sustained growth of value-added exports strengthened." The Results Framework in Figure 5 shows the relationship between the smaller units of results (IRs and sub-IRs) and the larger SO. The Results Framework represents the overall development hypothesis and links the SO, IRs and sub-IRs with both vertical and horizontal logic. The supporting sub-IRs are crafted to form necessary and sufficient packages of results to achieve IRs, but also: 1) take into account activities of key donors in the sector, and 2) are predicated on the critical assumptions described later in this section, in particular, appropriate and timely actions by the Government of Guyana.



Figure 5- USAID Guyana Results Framework for 2004-2008



Intermediate Result (IR) 1: *Key Trade & Investment Policies, Standards, and Practices Are Consistent with Negotiated Obligations and International Best Practices*

IR 1 seeks to ensure that Guyana has in place a “rules-based” trade regime that complies with: 1) Guyana’s obligations as a member of the WTO and CARICOM; 2) regulatory standards and practices emerging in the FTAA negotiations, and 3) trade-related international best practices. This IR will help Guyana address the “trade negotiation preparation” and “trade agreement implementation” components of the National Trade and National Capacity Building Strategies.

IR 1.1: *Human and Institutional Capacity to Prepare Negotiating Positions and Implement Negotiated Commitments*

GOG must be able to identify clear priorities for trade negotiation and take full advantage of training and technical assistance available. Such assistance will enable Guyana to better prepare for, and participate in, trade negotiations, thus maximizing its benefits under trade agreements. USAID will assist Guyana businesses and government institutions to develop essential trade-related technical knowledge and skills.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Provide technical assistance and training in analyzing, drafting, and negotiating specific trade agreements.
- Technical assistance, equipment, and training to improve computerization and internet connectivity among key public trade organizations.

IR 1.2: *Country Trade Policy Consultative Process Fosters:*

- *Public and private sector consensus on policy, regulatory, and legislative priorities.*
- *Domestic support for negotiating positions and international commitments.*

Public and Private Sector Consensus: The Guyanese public and private sectors must work together to identify and prioritize Guyanese trade interests and develop a sound negotiating agenda to advance those interests during international negotiations. USAID will assist Guyana businesses and government to improve consultative processes in trade policy.

Domestic Support: Public unawareness of Guyana’s positions in international negotiations and benefits that may accrue tends to limit domestic support for international agreements and make it more difficult to effectively implement them. USAID will help the GOG and the Guyanese private sector address this problem.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance, training, and program support for public awareness programs, symposia, and seminars on negotiating issues and the Multilateral Trading System.

- Technical assistance, training, and program support to develop formal mechanisms from which to obtain regular input into trade issues from the private sector and civil society.

Intermediate Result (IR 2): *Guyana-Based Firms Interact to Increase Competitiveness in the Export of Value-Added Products and Services to High-Value Niche Markets*

This IR addresses the need to “transition to free trade,” identified in the national TCB strategy. USAID EG support under IR2 will ensure that the Guyanese private sector is successfully tailoring the country’s comparative advantages—and building competitive advantage—to market value-added products and services to high-value niche markets on a sustainable basis.

IR 2.1: *Technical and Business Development Services (T&BDS) Skills Produce and Deliver Competitive Products and Services*

Adherence to strict production methods and codes can be a differentiating factor in international markets. USAID will help Guyanese firms identify new products and develop the production standards, codes of conducts and certifications necessary to comply with international standards.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Technical assistance, training, and program support to specialized business sectors, including hands-on training in various aspects of business, utilizing volunteer retired executives and managers of similar businesses.
- Technical assistance, training, and program support to establish export standards and quality management programs.

IR 2.2: *Institutional Capacity to Identify and Establish Links to High-Value Niche Markets*

USAID will assist Guyanese firms to: 1) identify promising markets and market niches; 2) understand product and services needs of those markets (and those for which customers are willing to pay a premium), and 3) produce and export products and services that match high standards in order to capitalize on international market opportunities.

Illustrative Approaches:

- Training for government and business in market analysis, strategic planning, product development and implementation, cost analysis and reduction.
- Technical assistance and training in export marketing, public relations campaigns, participation in trade fairs and international marketing techniques.

Assumptions and Causal Relationships

Achieving the EG SO depends on several critical assumptions. IR 1 emphasizes influencing key elements of trade negotiations, and helping the business community

respect and take advantage of the agreements negotiated. GOG commitment to the timely passage and implementation of trade-related policies, legislation and regulations is critical to the achievement of IR 1. In addition, the ability of private businesses to adjust to a more export-oriented approach could be compromised by individual factors such as a severe generalized downturn in local or international market conditions. More generally, this strategic framework is based on an assumption that the road from Georgetown through Lethem to Brazil continues to improve, but does not become a major corridor for some years. USAID should be ready to evaluate its relevance to this strategic objective and adjust program emphasis and implementation accordingly.

The Economic Growth SO focuses on Guyana's need to increase business activity and productivity through trade and export-led growth. Achieving the IRs will directly result in achievement of the strategic objective because the IRs focus on addressing constraints to: (1) the most significant barriers to trade negotiation preparation and trade agreement implementation, thereby improving Guyana's capacity to identify, prioritize, negotiate, and implement "rules of trade" agreements, and (2) the most significant "transition to free trade" constraints to the private sector's capacity to be competitive in the export of value-added products and services to high-value niche markets.

IR 1 seeks to improve the business environment by strengthening Guyana's capacity to attract increased export-focused investment, chiefly through the strengthening of policy-making agencies (IR 1.1) and the consultative process providing input and feedback from stakeholders (IR 1.2). IR 2 emphasizes value-added products and competitiveness and quality improvements that will sustain these increases. IRs 1 and 2 focus directly on the image improvement needed for Guyana to increase its performance in attracting new investment. IR 2 contributes to the sustainability requirement of the SO. It also significantly contributes to the value, value-added, differentiation, and marketability of Guyana's exports consistent with the focus on quality, image, and specialty. In sum, the two IRs interact and contribute directly to achieving the Strategic Objective.

Program Synergies

The proposed USAID/Guyana economic growth strategy is necessarily based on the Mission's past experience and its comparative advantage. Since future economic growth in Guyana must come from the export sector—specifically the successful exploitation of overseas, and especially regional, markets—USAID must take advantage of the value of synergies and collaboration with other donors in overcoming the constraints to sustained growth of value-added exports. The recommended Results Framework will support the Mission's other SOs and benefit from synergies with them. Effective coordination will highlight and develop these synergies over the program period.

Linkages with Democracy and Governance. Issues of contract enforcement, corporate governance, commercial law, public-private dialogue, institutional reform, legislative involvement, and other elements of the EG strategy segue with the DG strategy, which

places emphasis on transparency and accountability in government (IR 2) and input from civil society in the affairs of government (IR1). Such an environment will stimulate collaboration and trust between businesses and the government and motivate businesses to take greater risks.

Linkages with HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS SO contributes to the EG SO by maintaining a productive and health workforce, and reducing business and government expenditures on treatment and care. Successful containment of the HIV/AIDS epidemic is also expected to have a positive impact on long-term macro-economic performance because it will decrease the myriad social, economic, and political costs of confronting this devastating disease.

Linkages with Environmental Issues. The EG strategy views Guyana's rich environmental heritage as an economic resource that must be wisely and effectively used, promoted, and protected. The proposed strategic framework is congruent with the recommendations of the Section 118/119 (environmental assessment; pg 65). IR 2 includes addressing trade-related environmental issues in order to foster the sustainable production of products and services for niche export markets, and recognizes the economic incentives and competitive advantages that accrue from fair trade, environmental conservation, and unique biodiversity. As an example, the Mission will support study tours for representatives from agriculture, agribusiness and tourism so that they become familiar environmentally sound products and approaches, such as those developed in Costa Rica, Uganda, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and elsewhere.

As noted in the environmental analysis, improving the road to Brazil is a high national priority, and offers striking potential benefits and challenges of an environmental nature. USAID activities related to the road to Brazil must focus on community involvement in planning, developing, and using the road in a manner that enhances Guyana's increasing economic competitiveness, while preserving its biodiversity as a sustainable, economic resource.

Linkages with Gender Issues. The EG Strategy has considered ways to ensure that women participate in and benefit from the promotion of value-added exports. USAID will take an affirmative role in assuring that women are participants in policy, planning, and decision-making activities supported by USAID. USAID will also examine the potential for women's small business creation and growth, employment generation, employment benefits, as well as backward and forward linkages between micro/small and medium/large businesses when identifying economic growth activities or sectors.

Judging for Results

The PMP provides SO's indicators, baselines and targets. While some illustrative IR indicators have been provided, additional work will be undertaken to develop a complete PMP and data collection system for use in monitoring program progress and accomplishments.

Sustainability

All efforts will be made to ensure sustainability of activities executed under the EG SO. The focus of the EG SO is on export promotion, the most viable alternative for Guyana, given its small population base and limited domestic market. Consequently, government, the main stakeholder, will be duty-bound to maintain this emphasis on export promotion as a policy for facilitating increased government revenues, stimulating greater economic growth and meeting conditions and benchmarks set out by the IFIs. In light of this, there is a strong possibility that activities supported under this SO will be given high priority and efforts will be made, particularly by the government, to ensure that they do not lapse should USAID funding cease. In addition, attempts will be made, in the design and execution of all activities to include all relevant stakeholders, giving them in the process a sense of ownership of the project. This will serve to ensure that their interest remains high and provide the necessary incentive for them to work towards ensuring the project's success. Efforts will also be made to capitalize on potential synergies with other donors working in similar areas. This will have advantages of having more than one donor monitoring and evaluating the project, a larger pool of resources and varying phasing in and phasing out assistance schedules, all of which when combined, will enhance the viability of interventions under the SO. USAID/Guyana will seek to use some resources to leverage funds in line with GDA approaches, in particular through the DCA, which will build critical capacity and provide demonstration effects. Activities will tend to be self-sustaining when participants realize, after an initial period of USAID support, that such activities are profitable and that they have the necessary capacity to undertake them on their own. Finally, as a means of institutionalizing training and ensuring its sustainability, efforts will be made to train potential trainers in several of the agencies in which interventions are being made. These trained local professionals will in turn conduct such courses in the future.

IV. Resource Requirements

A. Program Funding

The Guyana Country Plan timeframe and funding period is FY 2004 through FY 2008.

The funding is distributed in the following manner among the Strategic Objectives:

SO 504-005: HIV Transmission Reduced and Impact of AIDS Mitigated - \$20,000,000³

SO 504-006: Democratic Governance Consolidated - \$10,000,000

SO 504-007: Enabling Environment for Sustained Growth of Value-Added Exports Strengthened - \$10,000,000

B. Staffing Pattern

Within the Mission, the office of the Director is currently staffed with one USDH- the Mission Director, and a FSNPSC filling the position of Secretary/ Assistant to the Director. The D/G program is staffed with one USPSC in the position of Senior D/G Advisor and one FSNPSC as Civil Society Advisor. One USPSC serving as the HIV/AIDS Coordinator, one FSNPSC (Program Assistant) and one Michigan Fellow (Adolescent Health Advisor) comprise the HIV/AIDS team. One FSNPSC professional fills the position of Program Management Specialist/Economist under the Economic Growth program. The Program Office is staffed with one FSNPSC- Program Management Specialist. The Executive Office is staffed with one Executive Officer- an USPSC, one Chauffeur/ Office Assistant and one Chauffeur, both being FSNPSCs.

³Guyana is one of the focus countries under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and funding levels are set by the Global AIDS Coordinator.

V. Annex: Summary of Technical Analyses

Summary of Conflict Vulnerability Assessment

Prepared by Management System International Inc. November 2002

Disputes, disagreements, and even conflict can be a normal and healthy part of any socio-political system. It is the intention of this conflict vulnerability assessment (CVA) is to look past prosaic sources of friction and concentrate our efforts on potential contributors to widespread violent conflict. In saying this we of course recognize that drawing these distinctions is not always so straightforward. In fact it is also likely true that a consideration of many less serious disputes and disagreements sheds light on what does and does not tend to lead to more serious levels of conflict. Nonetheless, making these distinctions is perhaps one of the most important analytical tasks that this report undertakes.

On the whole, the CVA team came away from field work in Guyana both amazed at what at times seemed like an intractable level of political mistrust at the highest levels and pessimism about the capacity for the actors in question to see beyond immediate political self-interest. At the same time, the team also noted a number of significant assets that Guyana as a whole possesses and believes that the most important finding of the CVA is as follows: *There is reasonably high level of likelihood that significant conflict could occur in Guyana in the medium range future (3-10 years) and that it is likely to occur during or immediately after electoral periods. Notwithstanding, and of urgent priority, is the belief that the CVA team has that donors in general, and USAID in particular, are positioned to make a difference and to be able to alter what might otherwise become a highly conflict-laden situation.*

Annex: Summary of Gender Assessment

Prepared by DevTech Systems Inc., August 2003

In Guyana today, gender issues are subsumed within the broader context of social, economic, and political dysfunctions and problems. The relations between men and women in terms of roles, access to resources, and power are circumscribed by the conditions of political instability, governance issues, crime and violence, and divisiveness. The disenfranchisement felt by the population cuts across all societal divisions, including gender. Indications are that the responses to the situation also are similar for men and women – protest, emigration, and general lack of “ownership” in the public sphere.

Both men and women are affected by these conditions but, in general, women carry a disproportionate burden relative to men, in economic and social terms.

- Women are more likely to be living in poverty, and increasingly carry sole responsibility for household maintenance and childrearing.

- In the formal sector, public and private, women are in lower paying jobs and less likely to be in decision-making positions. With the contraction of the formal sector, increasingly women have moved to the informal sector at a subsistence level.
- The decline of social services places additional burdens on the household and on women. In addition, women usually are responsible for care of the sick. However, both men and women are afflicted by the HIV/AIDS virus.
- The phenomenon labeled “male underachievement,” indicated most clearly by boys dropping out of secondary school and spurning tertiary education, seems to be, at least in part, a response to these same social and economic conditions.

Institutionally, attention to women’s rights and to gender issues has been bolstered by a nascent women’s movement linked to regional Caribbean organizations and international conventions and UN conferences. Donor support, particularly from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Gender Equity Program, has been an important stimulus for improving the legal foundation for gender equality and building programs to deal with gender issues.

USAID has successfully targeted women, youth, and Amerindians in its programs to strengthen civil society organizations and democratic institutions. Specific efforts have been directed to increasing women’s participation in local government. At the same time, in the past, the Mission has not taken an explicit gender perspective in developing its portfolio. The gender assessment includes a baseline overview of gender analysis by sector.

Economic Growth: The Mission’s current economic growth program focuses primarily on institutional and macro-level policy support to strengthen the private sector to facilitate increased exports and trade. It does not directly address key economic structural disparities between men and women, which are principally issues related to workforce, employment, and poverty. The recommendations for incorporating gender considerations in the new economic growth strategy are built around two key points. First, in developing the institutional and macro-level policy support, USAID should take an affirmative role in increasing women’s representation in key decision-making organizations and consultations, and in involving the product areas in which women predominate. The segregation in the labor market between “men’s work” and “women’s work” means that men and women face different constraints and see the market differently. If women are not included in decision-making, half of the picture is missing. USAID also can work to increase women’s access to information and training to ensure informed participation.

The second point deals with the impact of macro-level institutions and policy on the poor, and on the operating environment for micro- and small businesses. A series of recommendations are offered to explicitly take account of the effects of the policy agenda on employment, emigration, business development, and supply chain links with micro-enterprises, in order to increase the positive effect on women’s status and to develop policies that support poverty reduction.

Democracy and Governance: Recognizing the primacy of improved governance for all aspects of life in Guyana, the Mission has developed a spectrum of activities in this area. Although women have been targeted in some activities, gender analysis and gender training have not been a part of implementation. The assessment recommends the use of gender analysis in the formulation of the program, and of gender awareness training for participants to increase program effectiveness and sustainability, and to provide a potential opening to break through the overriding social and political impasse that has paralyzed the government. In Guyana, where race defines party loyalty, issues, and interests, the program could explore the possibility of expanding its activities with women, organized around the common problems they face as women, to bridge these divisions in society.

The assessment recommends that the Mission take steps to facilitate linkages between urban-based women's organizations (i.e., organizations that focus on issues related to women's rights and the economic, social, and political empowerment of women) that have a 'geographic reach' and a focus on issues related to the strategic interest of women, to community-based women's groups that focus on the practical needs of women at the local level. In the past, women in Guyana, across racial and ethnic groups, have worked together to prepare, for example, the platform for the World Conference on Women in Beijing and to advocate for new legislation and amendments to existing laws on women's rights. Addressing particular gender-based issues that women face as women may be a means by which issues can be taken out of the individual realm and delinked from race, party, or government.

HIV/AIDS: Reduction of risk of HIV/AIDS transmission will be the largest program to be implemented by the Mission during the next strategy period. Because of the attention directed to gender issues by the HIV/AIDS assessment and design team, it is treated with less depth here than would otherwise be expected. Gender roles and relations are key variables in understanding both transmission and treatment in the epidemic. A youth organization currently working to prevent transmission said that, in their experience, the principal gender issue in the HIV/AIDS program is the case of young men, devoid of opportunities for employment or achievement and with low self-esteem. The young men not only consider themselves to be invincible but also are reluctant to seek information or advice. At the same time, the risk for young women of contracting the disease is increased by their limited capacity to negotiate sexual activity because of differences in power between men and women and women's economic dependence.

In general, women have more contact than men with the health system, in large part in their role as mothers. Women themselves, as adults, are traditionally underserved. The emphasis in HIV/AIDS programs on mother-to-child transmission brings women into the system in the same way. There is a concern that, although women are more likely than men to be tested in order to stop transmission, inadequate attention may be given to treatment for the women who are sick.

A third point concerns the importance of tailoring the messages and approaches to influence behavior that increases risk for transmission to difference by race, religion, and

gender, and particularly to the intersection of culture and gender. Messages designed for men should not be offensive to women – and vice versa.

Summary: Overall, two general observations can be drawn from the assessment. First, gender roles and relations are a factor across all three Mission program areas, and gender analysis should be a part of subsequent design and implementation. Second, as the Mission seeks to maximize the impact of their programs by building links among them, gender analysis may point to important intersections. Gender relations cut across sectors and programs and the relations among the sectors and activities are highlighted under this lens.

Finally, the assessment offers several recommendations for the Mission in continuing the process of mainstreaming gender considerations into the program cycle. Internally, the first step will be to identify a focal point for implementation of the requirements related to gender and to provide technical assistance in field activities. Training in gender analysis for Mission staff and project implementers would be useful to provide tools for mainstreaming. Reiterating a requirement in the Automated Directives System (ADS), the Mission should develop gender-based indicators to monitor the impact of gender mainstreaming. Externally, by working with partners and implementing organizations in developing their capacity for gender analysis and requiring attention to gender issues as a criterion in selection of contractors, USAID will not only improve gender mainstreaming in its activities but also may serve as a catalyst for attention to the importance of gender by government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

*Annex: Summary of Section 118/119 Analysis
Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Conservation, Protection and Management in Guyana*

Prepared by Jean Brennan, Christy Johnson, and Safia Aggarwal, July 2003

The following report, “*Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Conservation, Protection and Management in Guyana*” is an environmental analyses prepared for the purpose of assisting in the development of the USAID/Guyana Mission’s new 2004-2008 Country Strategy (as required by Sections 118(e) and 119(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act). The goal of the analysis was to identify the threats to the conservation of Guyana’s tropical forests and biological diversity, and to examine the extent to which the proposed Mission strategy and activities address the threats.

In many ways Guyana is two separate countries: one exists on a small narrow strip of coastal plain, made up of roughly 10% of the area, while housing roughly 90% of the population. This coastal Guyana has a similar culture as the English-speaking Caribbean, as well as similar environmental issues – solid waste challenges, inadequate water supply and sanitation, pesticide and fertilizer runoff from agriculture. The other Guyana, the interior Guyana covers more than 90% of the country’s overall area and has only 10% of the population. The interior is also known as the “hinterlands” and culturally and environmentally it has more in common with Brazil and Venezuela than with coastal Guyana and the Caribbean. It is primarily made up of scattered Amerindian (indigenous) communities that struggle with issues related to land tenure (indigenous claims and

conflict from invading colonists from neighboring countries), and socio-economic, environmental, and human health impacts associated with mineral and forest resources exploitation. Largely because of its low population density, low level of development, and the resultant relative lack of threats to biodiversity, Guyana presents a significant opportunity for environmental conservation and pursuing this opportunity need not conflict with Guyana's needs for development. In fact, Guyana's best chance may be to address its economic and social needs by developing and managing its natural resources in a sustainable, equitable manner. However, Guyana is urgently in need of a strengthened and more involved civil society and, as it develops its natural-based economic and trade potential, greater environmental protection and multi-stakeholder participation in resource utilization and design of much needed infrastructure.

The USAID/Guyana Mission has proposed a strategy focusing on consolidation of democracy and good governance, reduction of the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission, and improvement in the economic policy environment to foster and expand trade. Although the new Country Strategy will not include a self-standing environment program there are tremendous opportunities to address environmental needs within the context of the economic growth and democracy programs, and to provide strong synergy to the population health/HIV-AIDS program. Indeed, given Guyana's critical need for greater civil society participation and economic growth, and the fact that much of the growth will likely be fueled by the country's vast natural resources, a collaborative approach among the program elements may be the most effective approach it achieve the Mission's strategic objectives.