

Public-Private Partnerships in Latin America and the Caribbean

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2007

Press Office: 202-712-4320

Public Information: 202-712-4810

www.usaid.gov

Recognizing that both the public and private sectors can benefit from pooling their resources to define and address development problems, the U.S. Government, through USAID, sponsors public-private partnerships throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. These partnerships, which include non-governmental organizations, are instrumental in generating economic growth, addressing health and environmental issues, supporting democracy and increasing access to health services, education and technology.

USAID-supported public-private partnerships include but are not limited to:

Caribbean

In partnership with the American Chamber of Commerce of the Dominican Republic (DR) and the DR Ministry of Education, USAID launched the Investing in Education for Competitiveness Program to help private companies “adopt” public schools to support educational initiatives such as improving school infrastructure, training teachers, building libraries, and donating school supplies. During the first year of the program, 10 local companies supported 23 public schools, benefiting more than 14,000 students.

USAID, working with public and private sector partners, is implementing a special production and marketing development program called JA FARMS in Jamaica to help farmers and agri-businesses improve crop production and access to markets. JA FARMS helps farmers adopt innovative agricultural practices, including greenhouses, to improve production quality and quantity. This partnership has created new markets and improved production technology. One producer, Rock Mountain Herb, saw its revenue increase 50 percent over the last year. The average income for the 12 contract growers increased 550 percent.

Central America

The Alliance for Social Investment (“Alianzas”) project is a public-private partnership in Guatemala where USAID and a wide array of private sector partners focus on enhancing access to and quality of health and education. In late 2005 when Hurricane Stan struck Guatemala, causing serious damage to the country’s infrastructure and agricultural productivity, Alianzas and USAID coordinated a private sector response. More than 30 public and private partners supported disaster relief and reconstruction through activities related to clean water supply, hygiene practices, repair and reconstruction of latrines, and cleaning of wells. More than 31,000 families benefited from this partnership work.

In Nicaragua, USAID, working with U.S. and local private sector partners, is helping small and medium-sized entrepreneurs access venture capital funding as an alternative to bank loans. The partnership identifies promising small and medium enterprises, offers them technical assistance to refine their business models, and helps them access financing. The partnership also continues to provide support after the launch of the new businesses. In the first six months of the partnership, 15 businesses received support and two companies accessed the venture capital fund.

In Honduras, USAID formed a public-private partnership to provide technical assistance to a network of rural micro handicraft producers. The producers also receive information on current trends of the international handicrafts market. This work has enabled the producers to update designs and expand their markets. Approximately 400 handicraft producers have received training under this partnership. In addition, more than 1,700 jobs have been created – with more than half going to women. The partnership has generated over \$2 million in quality handicraft exports.

South America

In Colombia, USAID, with private sector partners, is promoting the development of specialty coffee in five regions: Narino, Cauca, Huila, Caldas, and Tolima. Investments made under the partnership include production and processing infrastructure, as well as promotion and marketing in the specialty coffee sector. These projects have benefited 1,448 families.

In partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, Microsoft Ecuador, the Government of Ecuador, INTERPOL, and the Ricky Martin Foundation, USAID is working to protect children and promote online security and safety (specifically against trafficking in persons and child pornography). Computer and investigative training has been provided to more than 55 local authorities and police.

In one of the most depressed areas in central Bolivia, USAID is working with the regional government, indigenous communities, and farmer-owned enterprises to develop fresh organic oregano and related value-added products. Under this partnership, some 1,500 indigenous farm families have doubled their incomes and are exporting, for the first time, to the lucrative organic niche markets of North America and Europe.