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FACT SHEET

Summary of the Alternative Development Program

BACKGROUND

USAID's Alternative Development program started in 2000 with the purpose of promoting economic and social alternatives to illicit crop production through productive projects, enterprise development, natural resource protection, institutional strengthening, and promoting access to markets.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- **Productive Activities:** Productive components form the basis of USAID's program, and promote the establishment and commercialization of various competitive products, including a wide variety of agricultural crops (such as milk, rubber, yucca, passion fruit, specialty coffee, cacao, African palm, and hearts of palm), forest products, and products made by suburban and rural micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises. Local community and farmer participation in these programs require a verifiable commitment for either up-front eradication of illicit crops, if they are present, or commitment not to cultivate illicit crops. Working along the value chain, from production to marketing, these activities help local producers and businesses expand, hire new employees, and provide a more stable economic environment. These activities have leveraged over US\$0.5 billion in local private and public sector investments since 2003. Productive activities also support food security programs with local indigenous and farmer (*campesino*) groups.
- **Local Governance Strengthening and Social/Productive Infrastructure Activities:** As a critical component of alternative development, USAID provides comprehensive training, technical assistance, and co-financing of community infrastructure projects to Colombian municipalities benefiting from alternative development. USAID assistance is designed to improve the capacity of municipal governments to plan and provide basic services, foster citizen participation in local decision-making, improve social infrastructure, and promote transparency and accountability at the local level. The USG's assistance also provides funds for roads, bridges, sewer systems, water treatment, and other rural facilities to strengthen public participation, improve municipal management capacity, and promote transparency. Activities have the common goal of increasing the presence and efficacy of the Colombian state, while also broadening citizen involvement in local governance. Efforts are coordinated with the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation *Acción Social*.
- **Natural Resource Protection:** This program supports the responsible conservation and management of both natural and plantation forests, water resources, and the implementation of environmentally responsible agro-forestry initiatives. This program is largely carried out through international and local NGO entities and works in close association and cooperation with the Government of Colombia's Alternative Development Program under the Office of the President.

RESULTS ACHIEVED UNDER THIS PROGRAM (as of 10/30/07):

- 158,516 hectares of licit crops supported in areas where illicit-crops were predominant.
- 23,446 hectares of illicit crops (coca and poppy) manually eradicated.
- 135,061 families benefited.
- 1,179 social and productive infrastructure projects completed.
- Over 50,000 licit, full time jobs created.
- Over 111 municipalities fiscally strengthened through municipal tax code improvements land titling.