

PD-ABT-827

USAID/LAC/RSD/EHR

**Regional Strategic Plan
For Education and Training**

FY 2001 – FY2006

July 2001

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ACRONYMS

CEPAL	Comisión Económica Para América Latina y el Caribe
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistant Committee
ECERP	Eastern Caribbean Education Reform
EDIFAM	Early Childhood Family Education
EDUCO	Educación con Participación de la Comunidad
EFA	Education for All
EHR	Education and Human Resources (Unit)
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTZ	Deutsche Gessellschaft Für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAA	Inter-Agency Agreement
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOHE	Inter-American Organization for Higher Education
IR	Intermediate Result
ISP	Inter-Sectoral Programming
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIO	Public International Organization
PREAL	Programa de Promoción de la Reforma Educativa en América Latina y el Caribe
PROMECE	Programa para el Mejoramiento de la Calidad de la Educación General Básica
RSD	Regional Sustainable Development (Office)
SIPs	Sector Investment Programs
SDPs	Sector Development Programs
SO	Strategic Objective
SpO	Special Objective
SPs	Sector Programs
SWAPs	Sector Wide Approaches
UNESCO	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USED	U.S. Department of Education
WB	World Bank
WUSC	World University Services Overseas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education systems in the LAC region are in crisis. They are not adequately educating the region's young, and are thus impeding the ability of the region to move forward economically, politically and socially. Although enrollments have increased rapidly over the last three decades, quality has eroded just as dramatically. Except for the small percentage of the elite who attend private schools, the majority of youth attend weak and under-funded public schools where they fail to acquire basic skills in mathematics, language and science. Additionally, large segments of society in the LAC region, particularly the poor, minorities and indigenous groups, and girls do not have equal access to quality education and, therefore, are not equipped to participate fully in the social, political and economic life of their countries. Moreover, when comparing countries of Latin America with countries of similar incomes in Asia and the Middle East, students from Latin America and the Caribbean enter the labor force with far less education than their counterparts.

Inefficiency plagues schools in the region, which report the world's highest-grade repetition rates, alarmingly high dropout rates, and low or erratic attendance. None of the poorer countries in the region have accomplished getting the average child through a year of school in only one year. Instead, the average student in the LAC region spends more than seven years in primary school, completing just four grades. Moreover, nearly one of every two students repeats the first grade. The cost associated with this wastage has been estimated at more than \$3 billion per year—nearly one-third the total public expenditure on primary education in the region. This means that funds, which could be supporting dramatic improvements in the quality of education, are being wasted as children repeat grades, and in the end, still not learning very much.

As was clear to the 34 heads of State who moved education reform to the top of the hemispheric agenda in the 1998 Summit of the Americas, Latin America and the Caribbean need new approaches to education. Traditional education policies are inadequate to address the major social, economic and political changes sweeping the region and are totally unresponsive to rapidly changing labor markets. The region's dramatic shift to open economies, democratic politics, and decentralized government has changed the demand for education, requiring that schools produce a flexible workforce, and prepare people for participatory governance and expanded social opportunities.

To meet these new challenges, the education systems of Latin America and the Caribbean will need to pursue simultaneously a set of challenging, and sometimes contradictory, objectives and policy choices. They must train students for jobs in a modern, internationally competitive economy; must promote social equity and mobility; and must prepare people for assuming their rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

To address some of these problems, over the last five years, LAC has supported a variety of activities to push education reform to the top of the region's policy agenda. Central among them has been support to the Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas (PREAL in Spanish), which was designed to promote a better understanding of education policy issues and develop a broader and more active constituency for education policy reform across the hemisphere. A recent evaluation of PREAL found that the program achieved remarkable success

in: 1) creating national-level debates on educational reform; 2) building public and private support for educational reform and raising the level of the debate across many sectors of government and civil society; 3) conducting broad research and publishing relevant materials of high professional quality; and 4) disseminating that information to major stakeholders in the region. PREAL was complimented for its excellent networks of senior people, good research and distribution and ability to create a vision. Despite these successes, the evaluators noted that for PREAL's recommendations to become a reality and result in actual policy changes, that policy reform dialogue should go beyond the high-level networks created by PREAL and include various levels of government and greater civil society participation.

Under LAC/RSD's new, proposed strategic objective, *Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity and Quality in Education and Training*, the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) will continue support for the PREAL program, which will focus more intensely on Central America, the region with the most serious education problems; more seriously engage the support of business leaders in reform; and deepen its focus in selected countries to encourage that its recommendations do in reality, get put into practice. Under the new SO, LAC also proposes to incorporate its current Special Objective #6 "A Broad Base of Leaders and Potential Leaders in LAC Countries Equipped with Technical Skills, Training and Academic Education," which has been supporting the Georgetown University Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS) program, a congressional directive to provide paraprofessional two-year scholarships to disadvantaged youth from the LAC region. LAC's new strategic objective will also support a number of other regional initiatives, including (a) the strengthening of three teacher training and resource centers in the Caribbean, Central America and the Andean region of South America (part of a recent Presidential Initiative announced at the latest Summit in Canada); (b) a secondary education regional forum to promote quality and workplace-relevant secondary education throughout the region; (c) development of comparable national education indicators for the region; and (d) support for the expansion of regional dialogue on reform beyond the high-level circles focused upon by PREAL, to the various stakeholders of education and larger civil society, to include parents, students, teachers, unions, school administrators, and local/regional government. As one can see, the proposed strategy is both a continuation, an expansion and a refinement of the current strategy, as well as a consolidation of the entire LAC/RSD/EHR-managed portfolio under one strategic objective. The activities implemented under this SO will complement and reinforce the Agency's Economic Growth, Trade and Agriculture pillar by strengthening the human capacity of the region through improved education and training.

In essence, the purpose of this SO is to improve the equity and quality of basic education by strengthening regional initiatives and institutions that: 1) improve the environment for education reform; 2) improve the skills of teachers and administrators; and 3) improve the relevance and skills of the workforce. Within the policy component of this strategy (IR1), it is important to note that we are not proposing to carry out policy reforms in individual countries since we do not have sufficient funding to do so, and implementing country-specific reforms is not in our manageable interest. Rather, our aim is to help build regional constituencies for reform- -constituencies that will enhance the *environment* for reform by holding their leaders accountable for moving forward on the educational improvements they have been agreeing to at the Summits. We hope to accomplish this by continuing support for the successful PREAL program, as well as by

initiating support for existing civil society (and possibly local government) networks to take on education reform as part of their agenda. Note that in many cases these networks have been created and supported by USAID's Democracy and Governance Programs for years and have tackled many development issues, from human rights to environmental protection. We hope these groups can now be mobilized to focus on education reform—something that has received little public attention to date in countries throughout the region. Our work will include informing civil society about the education problems in their countries (often taking the solid research and messages of PREAL to the grassroots levels); assisting stakeholders in a country/countries/region to establish a consensus on agendas and strategies for reform; and helping stakeholders in a country/countries/region to develop plans for carrying out their strategies. All activities should lead to policy debate and/or changes.

There is no duplication between what is being proposed by LAC/RSD and LAC Missions and other donors. Although most Missions are trying to support education reform in their countries, for the most part, Missions are engaged in targeted improvements in educational service delivery to disadvantaged populations. Few are focused on systemic policy reform and none, given the bilateral focus of their programs, can work at a regional level. Although the development banks fully support the types of reform initiatives proposed in this strategy, given their limited availability of grant funds and restricted focus on giving loans to host governments to implement specific reforms and programs, the Banks do not have the flexibility to support the types of innovative research, constituency building and agenda-setting reform initiatives proposed in this strategy. It is also important to note that given the modest level of funds available and the regional nature of its work, LAC/RSD is not proposing to engage in service delivery, but rather to support and strengthen regional initiatives that create an environment conducive to education reform. Moreover, if any activities are undertaken within a country, they must have the support/commitment (financial and/or staffing) of the Mission, including the possibility that the Mission might take over management and funding in the future; must have potential for expansion, replication or serving as a model for other countries in the region; and/or another donor has indicated that it might fund/expand our model if proven successful.

The proposed SO maintains its focus on developing a constituency for reform among a variety of high-level national and regional actors and seeks to enhance the environment for education policy reform by expanding the education reform dialogue beyond the current high-level circles to selected sub-national groups in the greater civil society and local governments. Four of the five key education policy themes promoted in the current SO—revitalization of the teaching profession, improvement of educational standards and indicators, decentralization and increased local control of schools, and increased public investment in basic education—are prominent in the new strategy, along with the addition of a new emphasis on making secondary education and skills training more relevant to workforce needs. Thus, this strategy will include a new effort to initiate a regional forum to develop linkages between national development goals and secondary education. Three crosscutting themes are incorporated into the three IRs and their supporting activities: 1) reaching out to the disadvantaged; 2) enhancing partnerships; and 3) increasing civil society participation.

The proposed new Strategic Framework, as it relates to the entire USAID education program, is shown on the following page:

Agency Goal
Economic Growth, Trade & Agriculture

Agency Objective
Increased Human Capacity through
Education and Training

Strategic Objective
Strengthened Regional Initiatives to
Improve Equity & Quality in Education &
Training

**IR1 Improved Environment for
Education Reform**

Increase Support For Education Reform In & Between Countries, Strengthen Organizations Working For Education Improvement & Research & Disseminate Best Education Policies & Practices (PREAL)

Support Expanded Demand-Driven Dialogue To Enhance Education Reform

Develop Comparable National Education Indicators For Region (UNESCO & IA To Ministries Of Education)

Support Decentralized School Management
Peru, Haiti, Guatemala

Support Integration of National Student Assessment into Teacher Training
Jamaica

Support Policy Dialogue
Honduras, Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic

IR2 Improved Skills of Teachers & Administrators

Strengthen the Capacity of Three Teacher & School Administrator Training & Resource Centers (in the Caribbean, Andes, & Central America)

Support Teacher Training
Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Peru

IR3 Improved Relevance & Skills of Workforce

Identify & Support Regional Initiatives To Improve The Quality Of Secondary Education In The Region

Support Lower-Secondary Curriculum
Honduras

Provide Para-Professional Training Scholarships To Disadvantaged Youth (Georgetown U. - CASS)

Support Vocational Education & Skills Training
Honduras

Support At-Risk Youth
Jamaica, Brazil

Provide Loans to Governments for Development of Secondary Ed Programs (IDB, W. Bank)

**Increased Mission Support
To Targeted Populations**

Support Early Childhood Development
El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru

Support Girl's Education
Peru, Guatemala

Support Bilingual, Multicultural Ed
Nicaragua, Guatemala

Support Distance Education, Interactive Radio
Honduras, Haiti

Provide Loans to Governments to expand and improve Primary Education Populations (IDB, W. Bank)

Note that only the dark shaded boxes at the top represent activities proposed by LAC/RSD under this proposed strategy. The double lined boxes below represent complementary activities being carried out by Missions and shaded boxes at the bottom represent complementary activities being carried out by the IDB and World Bank. The stacked boxes on the right represent additional service-delivery activities implemented by USAID bilateral programs. There are undoubtedly other Mission and donor programs not shown, though significant ones are captured here.

In summary, few issues facing the societies of Latin America and the Caribbean are more important than educational reform. To address this, USAID/LAC/RSD proposes, with a relatively small amount of funds, to continue its successful efforts to build a broad-based constituency in support of education reform and to vault improved quality and equity in education and training to the top of the region's policy agenda. Although much has been accomplished already, it is clear that much more needs to be done to ensure that the voices of this nascent constituency are heard, and to ensure that the reforms proposed are successfully implemented. It is also clear that because similar constraints are shared by the countries of the hemisphere, they lend themselves to a regional solution. Not only does this regional movement allow countries to learn from each other, share best practices, and standardize approaches, but most importantly, it allows them to work collectively to overcome major obstacles that might be too politically daunting for national governments to undertake on their own. LAC/RSD, with its regional focus, flexible grant funding, and five years of experience helping to vault education reform to the top of the region's policy agenda, is uniquely situated to help continue this process.

PART I: OVERVIEW

I. Development Challenge

As set by 34 heads of states at the Summit of the Americas in 1998, and reaffirmed in 2001 at the Third Summit in Quebec, the improvement of education in Latin America and the Caribbean is indispensable to achieving the goals of human development, social change, economic progress, and the elimination of poverty. Although the challenges are enormous, so is the potential for positive change. Over the last five years a hemispheric movement to improve education has taken root, which includes the work of the Summit, PREAL, UNESCO and other regional initiatives. Not only does this regional movement allow countries to learn from each other, share best practices, and standardize approaches, but most importantly, it allows them to work collectively to overcome major obstacles that might be too politically daunting for national governments to undertake on their own. Not only is LAC/RSD, with its five years of experience in education reform, uniquely situated to help lead this process, but LAC/RSD also believes this strategy is the most effective approach for a regional activity to leverage major changes in the manner in which national governments invest massive expenditures in education.

To provide a context for the roles that USAID can play and problems that need to be addressed in reforming education in the LAC region, it is important to examine the larger economic, social and political factors that affect and are affected by education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Collectively and individually, these issues point to the complexity of the problems and the urgency for change.

A. Increased Inequality

In spite of concerted efforts of donors and LAC governments to address poverty, income distribution in the LAC region remains the worst in the world (and became even more skewed during the 1990s in certain countries). Forty percent of the population still lives in dire poverty on less than \$2 per day. Cutting poverty in half by 2015 is the key objective of the Summit of the Americas and the OECD/DAC, though few believe it will be reached. Although the economic growth of the 1990s did advance the region, the absolute number of poor people has continued to grow. Much of this inequality reflects a failure of LAC countries to invest in quality education for all children. Moreover, rising relative wages for the most educated and skilled workers is putting pressure on governments to invest even more money into higher education (which is already extremely over funded relative to primary and secondary education in the region) which will have the undesired effect of exacerbating an already extreme inequality of income in the region.

B. Economic Globalization

During the last decade, several LAC economies have begun to recover from the dark economic days of the 1980s. This has been the result of the introduction of economic reforms that privatized inward-looking, state-dominated industries and caused them to become market driven, globally oriented, and more efficient. Globalization and trade liberalization have also prompted several LAC governments to adopt economic policies that focus on maintaining macroeconomic

stability and providing an enabling environment for private-sector development; while regional trade alliances such as MERCOSUR, NAFTA and FTAA have exposed LAC countries to intense international competitiveness. While these changes mean new opportunities for growth, LAC governments have found that their greatest weakness in the global marketplace is their lack of human capital. Whether the countries of the region can succeed in meeting the challenge of international competition will depend largely on how rapidly they are able provide youth with high-quality education that allows them to compete in globally competitive labor markets.

C. Participatory Democracy

The LAC region, over the last decade, has also witnessed an almost universal transition from dictatorship to participatory democracy. Virtually every country in the region now has a democratically elected head of state and an increasingly active civil society. Despite these monumental achievements, there are growing problems of violence and crime in the region, which many believe results partly from the fact that the poor have not seen the benefits of their nation's political and economic achievements and are increasingly disenfranchised. Thus, it is clear to all that until the poor in the region see improvements in their lives, LAC democracies will remain fragile and illegal immigration of the poor and uneducated from Latin America and the Caribbean to the U.S. will remain at high levels.

Not only is education the key to giving the poor opportunities to reap the benefits of their country's economic changes, but education is also the key to teaching youth about their roles and responsibilities in a democratic society. Participatory democracy can be nurtured in the classroom because schools are appropriate environments for helping children develop critical reasoning skills, and for understanding the social, ethical, and moral consequences of their actions. Educated populations also tend to be more interested and involved in how their countries are run—a critical component of any democracy.

D. Demographic Transition

At the threshold of the new millennium, the population of the LAC region is changing in ways that are having enormous ramifications for the education sector in all countries. While the population of the region has been growing substantially, in most countries school-age children are becoming a smaller percentage of the population. Over the last thirty years the population of young people under the age of 15 tripled from 66 million to 157 million, while their share in the total population declined from 40 to 36 percent. By 2030 the population below age 15 will remain almost constant, at around 160 million. Similarly, the projected growth of the population between ages 6 and 18 (school age) in LAC is expected to remain constant over the next 50 years. These shifts in the age structure of the population mean that LAC governments are having to rethink their social and expenditure policies to meet the challenges of providing health and education to their changing populations. On the positive side, this decrease in the share of the school-age population in the population as a whole should enable governments to redirect some of their resources to improve the quality of education.

II. The State of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin American and Caribbean students enter the labor force with less education than their counterparts in Asia and the Middle East—and the gap is widening. Latin America's workforce averages less than six years of schooling, two years below world patterns. To make matters worse, the average years of schooling of the workforce rose by less than one percent annually during the 1990s, compared with sustained annual rates of some three percent over three decades for the four Asian Tigers (S. Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong). With lower rates of improvement, Latin America and Caribbean countries are fast falling behind their competitors. This trend is particularly disturbing given the concentrated efforts that governments have been making to provide universal access to education.

Today's high-tech jobs require a growing amount of education and reward it with greater earnings, widening the gap between those who are educated and those who

Over the past three decades, the region's major, and a very significant, achievement has been an expansion in enrollment, chiefly at the pre-school and primary levels—something not yet achieved in some regions of the world. This expanded enrollment resulted from the fact that over the last thirty years, access to primary education has remained a target of governments, donor agencies, and international organizations. Consequently, by the 1990s, LAC had a net growth in primary education enrollment from 84 percent to 94 percent. Another regional achievement includes reduced gender disparities. Now girls enroll in school at rates about equal to or greater than boys do at all levels of schooling. Girls' regional average enrollment rates increased from 84 percent to 93 percent between 1990-98. Other gains include greater support for schools in poor areas, greater textbook availability, some new classroom technologies, interventions to attract more parent participation, and changes in school management and administration. Further, the region's average student-teacher ratio of 24:1 is comparable to the world average. Over the years, USAID has provided considerable support in reaching these achievements.

Despite these very real gains, schooling in the LAC region is still considered sub-standard and statistics showing high rates of access are extremely misleading as they fail to highlight the extreme unevenness in educational gains, particularly in the poorer countries of Central America and the Caribbean (e.g. Haiti and the D.R.). There are still countries that do not meet acceptable standards of coverage and in a few countries some school-aged children—particularly children from low-income, indigenous and marginalized populations—remain without access to schooling. Moreover, poor children in public schools receive one-third fewer hours of schooling and cover 50 percent less of the official curriculum than their wealthier counterparts in private schools.

For those students who are in school, the **quality** of the education they receive is inadequate. Instruction in language, mathematics, and science continues to be poor. International test scores in these areas show schools in LAC are among the world's worst performers, the quality of teacher training and teaching methods is behind international standards, and assessment tools

that measure learning outcomes at all levels are lacking. Parents often prefer private schools as these typically invest more per student, recruit the best teachers and can afford better teaching materials. Major problems with teaching in public schools include that teachers tend to be poorly trained, poorly paid, and poorly managed. Most have significantly less education than their counterparts in developed countries and primary school teachers often have even less. Very few have completed a university degree and a growing number of teachers have no training at all. These problems are particularly acute in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Compounding the low quality of public education, LAC schools are the most **inefficient** in the world with high repetition and dropout rates, and low/erratic attendance. Even where enrollment is high, increased access to schooling has not led to higher retention rates. In 1995, in the region as a whole, only 66 percent of those entering school completed grade four. In several countries the average number of years it takes to produce a primary school-6-year cycle graduate is 10 to 14 years. In many countries, one-fourth to one-half of the students who enter primary school fails to make it to the fifth grade. By contrast, nearly all students who enter primary school in the East Asian Tigers, Egypt and China reach grade five. Even fewer students in the LAC region enter and finish secondary school. In 1998, only around 30 percent of students from the larger more developed countries such as Mexico, Argentina and Brazil graduated from high school. The situation is worse in the smaller, more underdeveloped countries.

In the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Colombia, a quarter or more of children who enroll in the first grade fail to make it to the second grade.

In Latin America there is also an enormous chasm between private and public schools. Families with the resources to do so send their children to private primary and secondary schools. Virtually all poor families—by necessity—send their children to public schools. While not all private schools are of high quality, the best schools in the region are private—and many of these are on a par with the best schools worldwide. Not surprisingly, the vast majority of repeaters attend public schools. Rural schools are the most deprived. Teachers have far less training than in urban settings, funding is lower, and fewer grades are offered. Distance makes it even more difficult for children to complete their primary education, and basic materials, such as libraries and textbooks, are often not available. In most countries, the richest 10% of 25 year-olds have 6-8 more years of schooling than the poorest 30%.

The educational deficiencies highlighted exist despite relatively high rates of public spending on education in the region. Latin American governments have increased their investment in education from 3.9% of GNP in 1980 to an average of 4.6% in 1997, exceeding levels in Eastern Europe and Southern Asia and not far off the average of 5.1% invested by developed countries. Part of the reason educational deficiencies are so common in primary and secondary education in the region is that public spending on education is disproportionately allocated among levels. Despite the poor coverage and low quality of primary and secondary education, substantially more resources are allocated by governments to higher education (\$1,485 per pupil annually) than to pre-primary and primary (\$252 per pupil annually) or secondary (\$395 per pupil annually). Although most LAC leaders realize that this distorted funding towards higher education primarily serves the middle- and upper-income population groups in their countries and discriminates against the poor, few LAC leaders have been willing to stand up to their

wealthy constituencies (including organized university students) who benefit from this subsidy to the wealthy.

Compounding the problems of just getting children to and through school, it has become clear to most leaders in the LAC region that their systems are failing to meet the demands of modern labor markets and modern citizenship. Because the region's traditional model of educational development—in place since the 1960s—has focused almost exclusively on expanding enrollments, few students in public schools have acquired the language, mathematical, problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making skills that are critical to both economic success and involved citizenship. At a time when human resources increasingly constitute the comparative advantage of nations, Latin America and many of the Caribbean countries are falling behind.

What is clear from all of the above is that because LAC schools are so inefficient and mismanaged, funds that could be supporting dramatic improvements in the quality of education and expanding opportunities for secondary education are being wasted on having children repeat grades one through four numerous times, and in the end, still receiving an inferior education. Worse yet, the education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean are exacerbating income inequality despite the fact that education may be the single most effective tool for reducing it.

III. Prospects for Reform

Latin American and Caribbean governments recognize the need for action and over the past several years, have begun giving increased priority to education reform. At the 1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami, the heads of state agreed to pursue three education goals over a 15-year period. In 1998, they reaffirmed their support by naming the Santiago Summit of the Americas the "education summit", committing themselves to revitalizing education and making it a sustained force for economic development and social equity.

The Summit process has effectively contributed to building an enabling environment for policy reform by increasing, among the highest levels of government, the level of knowledge about the education problems of the region and the need for urgent reform. The Summit gathered 34 heads of state together to determine the top priorities for education throughout the region and produced commitments to ten actions. Again, in 2001 at the Summit in Quebec, the education action plan was reiterated as a priority for the countries of the hemisphere. The ten actions confirmed at the Summit primarily target issues of access, quality, equity and relevance to complement the overarching goals of achieving universal primary education by 2010 and a 75 percent access rate for secondary education. The Summit process has clearly placed education firmly on the region's agenda, thereby bolstering the efforts of reformers.

Unfortunately, it's unlikely that the LAC countries will achieve the summit goals of universal

<i>SUMMIT EDUCATION GOALS</i>	
1)	<i>Provide universal access to and completion of quality primary education for 100 percent of the children by 2010;</i>
2)	<i>Provide access for at least 75 percent of young people to quality secondary education with an increasing percentage of young people who complete secondary education by 2010; and</i>
3)	<i>Assume responsibility for providing the general population with opportunities for life-long learning.</i>

primary education and 75 percent secondary enrollment by 2010. Several countries such as Nicaragua and Guatemala still report primary school enrollment rates that are less than 80 percent. Furthermore, recent projections suggest that those countries whose rates are among the lowest today—El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala—will have the largest school-age populations 10 years from now. These countries, therefore, will have to continue investing significant resources just to keep primary enrollment rates from declining. And enrollment rates are only part of the goal. Achieving 100 percent primary completion rates by 2010 is beyond reach since half of the LAC countries report a quarter or more of students fail to reach the fifth grade. Assuming that secondary enrollments in Latin America continue to grow at the same slow rate as they have over the past decade, by 2010 the gross enrollment rate will only reach 66 percent, well below the 75 percent summit goal. And since gross enrollments include a large number of overage or repeating students, actual access to secondary education, or net enrollments, will be much lower. A recent projection by the World Bank estimates that secondary enrollments will have to double between 1998 and 2010 to reach the summit goal. The current statistics and weak policy environment do not tell an encouraging story. Barring an all-out crusade, the Summit goals are not going to be reached.

Ten Education Actions of the 1998 Santiago Summit

1. *Implement targeted and inter-sectoral policies and develop programs that focus on groups at a disadvantage.*
2. *Establish or strengthen systems to evaluate the quality of education and give "special attention" to standards for reading, writing, mathematics, and science.*
3. *Develop programs to improve and increase the level of professionalism among teachers.*
4. *Strengthen education management and decentralization and promote better forms of community and family involvement.*
5. *Strengthen preparation, education, and training for the world of work.*
6. *Establish or improve educational strategies relevant for multicultural societies.*
7. *Develop within and outside the schools educational strategies that foster the development of values, with special attention to the inclusion of democratic principles, human rights, gender issues, peace, tolerance, and respect for the environment and natural resources.*
8. *Promote access to and use of the most effective information and communication technologies in education systems.*
9. *Seek to use technology to link schools and communities as a way of establishing ties in the Hemisphere.*
10. *Further scholarship and exchange programs for students, researchers, teachers, and educational administrators.*

Compounding these seemingly insurmountable obstacles to achieving the Summit goals, there has been a lack of involvement of civil society* and local/regional government in education reform dialogue. More importantly, civil society participation has been almost entirely absent from the Summit dialogue about education. While significant changes to a nation's education system require political determination, reform must also have the support and involvement of NGOs, the private sector, and the greater civil society (including teachers unions who remain a formidable opposition to change). PREAL has been one of the most active networks in the region trying to engage high-level political, business and civil society leadership in dialogue about

* For purposes of this strategy, civil society is being defined as all non-governmental actors, including business leaders, parents, students, teachers (and their unions), community groups and NGOs, etc.

education reform and its efforts remains critical, though the PREAL evaluation suggested that an expanded, more bottom-up effort which includes other actors is essential to achieving the goals of the Summit.

Despite the probability that most countries will not achieve the Summit goals by 2010, most donors and LAC leaders agree that progress toward them is essential. Progress toward achieving the Summit goals will require a significant change in government policy, considerable financial investment, and an active array of support from the many stakeholders of the education system, including students, parents, teachers, communities and all levels of governments. Even then, promoting 100 percent completion of primary school is of little use if the education those children receive is of poor quality. And in the countries with low primary school access figures, the achievement of increased secondary education enrollment targets cannot be reached unless they first improve their low primary school completion rates. Unfortunately, because the lack of technical capacity, civil society demand, operational infrastructure, and financial resources contribute to a weakened environment for change and test the strongest political will, opportunities for educational improvements (including those resulting from the Summit) are often missed by LAC countries. The key challenge for LAC countries is to take advantage of the momentum generated by these energizing regional initiatives, as they provide LAC leaders with opportunities for genuine collective action and can help governments to overcome national obstacles that they would not otherwise be able to undertake on their own.

The education challenges for LAC countries are second-generation problems (as the first generation reforms of increased primary school access has been, in most countries, overall achieved) and are exacerbated or are resulting from a sole focus, for so long, on expanding physical access to education, without much consideration given to the quality of the schooling. Fortunately awareness is increasing about the need to focus attention on issues that are more critical to the modernization of education systems; issues related to quality, equity, efficiency and relevance.

Among the numerous and complex problems confronting the education systems of LAC countries, there are three significant areas that appear to have some momentum as regional initiatives, and are thus areas on which USAID proposes to focus: 1) Improving the environment for education reform; 2) Improving the skills of teachers and administrators; and 3) improving the relevance and skills of the workforce. Helping to find solutions to these challenges will significantly impact the ability of the LAC countries to provide a higher quality education to a greater portion of the regions' population.

A. Weak Environment for Education Policy Reform

There is a need for policy reform to progress. Although top government and business leaders throughout Latin America now recognize that quality education is critical to their nation's growth and development, the political and social environment for reform has not been conducive to the implementation of priorities agreed upon at the Summit and through other forum.

The environment has not been conducive to change due in large measure to the fact that the level of public demand for reform has been inadequate to stimulate government action. In the current environment, citizens lack access to reliable information; there is a lack of processes to

systematically incorporate citizen views on reform and enable citizens to take responsibility as active participants in the progress of their communities and their children's schools; government commitment to be responsive, accountable and transparent has been inadequate and civil society has not held government accountable. Creating an improved environment work at the national, sub-national and community levels and it requires greater civil society participation in both finding and helping to implement and monitor innovative solutions

Efforts to strengthen the environment for education policy reform could easily be overwhelmed by the numerous problems that plague the education systems of the region. It is difficult to determine which challenges to tackle first or second. Are solutions to some of the obstacles gateways to solving others? To make the job more manageable, the USAID-funded PREAL Task Force on Education Reform in Central America, through research and informed debate, identified four key challenges to educational improvement, as published in the report, *Tomorrow is Too Late*. Widely distributed and considered the blueprint for educational reform in Central America, the Task Force report issued a regional call to action around the key problems underlying the region's educational deficiencies: 1) the failure to set standards and evaluate performance; 2) poor teaching and school management; 3) limited school authority and accountability; and 4) too little per-pupil investment in primary and secondary schools. Although these problems apply to most of the Latin American and Caribbean region, they are particularly relevant for Central America. At this point, both PREAL and LAC/RSD have chosen to make these four themes the focus of their efforts to improve the environment for education policy reform.

The Four Challenges to Educational Improvement:

1. A Need to Establish Education Indicators, Standards, and Evaluation System of Student Performance

For informed discussion to take place about the quality of education, people need information about the system, particularly about the performance of the system's outputs. Holding government leaders or teachers accountable is unrealistic when there are no educational standards or systems to evaluate performance based upon those standards—which is the case in most of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Because educational indicators and standards have not been established, parents and employers cannot easily hold schools accountable for what students learn, nor make sure that education has the quality and relevance necessary for participation in the global economy.

Progress is being made in the establishment of tests to measure student learning, yet these testing systems are new and many have serious shortcomings: capacity for testing and measurement is weak; test objectives are not clear; test results are not used to improve schools; and there is widespread resistance to measuring and comparing scores. Consequently, to date, no country in the hemisphere has established, disseminated, and implemented comprehensive and comparable national education standards or indicators.

The arena of standards and assessment is broad and seemingly daunting as it requires the development of appropriate indicators and performance standards, the construction and sampling of tests, and ultimately, a sound analysis of the information generated. This involves the construction of indicators and a mechanism for calculating, assessing and disseminating the information—all complex activities that are further complicated by the fact that the statistical

data required is subject to multiple interpretations and demands. Moreover, because Ministries of Education tend to have limited technical capacity in this area, are already overburdened and limited in their resources, their capacity to focus on standards and assessment is constrained. Even more critical, however, is that because a culture of accountability is largely absent in LAC countries and among those responsible for providing education, the providers (e.g. government officials and teachers) tend to distrust or even resist establishing standards or conducting assessments, and when such measures are imposed, governments tend to resist making their methodologies and results public. This results in reduced opportunities to identify where and why children are not learning and is a significant obstacle to moving forward with education reform.

Some sub-regions have worked to strengthen and integrate education assessment mechanisms through the creation or improvement of information systems and indicators that make possible comparisons of national education systems. Examples include subregional forums such as MERCOSUR, the Andres Bello Agreement, Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and CARICOM have been discussing approaches to achieving comparable education indicators. Examples of initiatives also include a consortium of ministers of education in Central America that is working to establish common standards in language, math and natural sciences for primary schools; and an effort in Jamaica, with support from USAID, other donors, and the banks, which has developed a national assessment system that has been integrated into the national curriculum. Many of the region's countries also participate in a number of regional and international projects such as the UNESCO-supported assessment of the "Jomtien Education For All" commitments. Other countries participate in initiatives at the world level such as the UNESCO/OECD World Education Indicators Project and the UNESCO World Indicators Program, sponsored by the new UNESCO Institute for Statistics and created in 1999 with the support of the World Bank. The multiplicity of initiatives focused on the development of education indicators is a reflection of the importance being placed on this issue—both by the countries and the donor community. But it also signals the need for coordination of these initiatives and for creating more efficient procedures that give greater order and meaning to data collection efforts, and avoid duplication or conflicting efforts.

At the second Summit of the Americas heads of state and governments agreed to strengthen their systems for assessing the quality of education and to establish ways to construct a set of comparable education indicators for the Americas that would facilitate the strengthening of national systems and better inform policy decisions. The Government of Chile, in collaboration with UNESCO, developed a coherent strategy for the countries of the region to work together, building on existing initiatives, in the development of comparable education indicators. This initiative, *The Regional Education Indicators Project*, was formally launched at the end of 2000, attracted excellent participation by the countries in the region, and was endorsed by 24 governments. To date 24 education indicators linked to the social and economic contexts of education systems, human, financial and material resources, and performance have been agreed to by all 24 governments. This initiative, which is receiving USAID support from LAC/RSD, has stimulated momentum to use quality information in education decision-making, and to strengthen a regional information system. It is considered a critical step in overcoming obstacles to improving the education systems of the region.

2. Schools Need More Local Authority and Accountability

The traditional model of school management in the LAC region is fundamentally flawed. Responsibility lies in the hands of central governments, which build and equip schools, establish salaries and personnel policies, hire teachers, select textbooks, establish curriculum, develop tests, and decide on other academic and administrative matters. Parents, principals, and teachers have almost no authority over the key aspects of school management—budgets, personnel, materials, and curriculum—and very little responsibility for results. Education ministries tend to be large, bureaucratic, and overloaded with responsibilities. They typically have excessive numbers of non-teaching staff on the payroll and tend to perform below the standards of any private corporation. Ministers change frequently and are appointed for political rather than professional reasons. Fundamentally, local authorities often lack basic management skills and have little experience in making decisions. The result is that school administrators and teachers are unable to implement changes that could potentially improve education.

While this model is slowly beginning to change in a few countries, only a handful of countries (notably some of those in Central America and Brazil) have placed significant authority and responsibility in the hands of local communities. But in most cases, very little authority has been devolved all the way to the school level, largely due to a lack of confidence in schools' abilities to manage. The authority that is delegated is often limited to pedagogical decisions or small project designs and few or no additional resources are allocated for staff training or new programs.

On the positive side, however, because there is a trend towards improving management of schools in the region, there have been some educational reforms introduced over the past decade that have resulted in a number of important changes in the governance and management of education, including the creation of student evaluation systems, strengthening of information systems, development of formal mechanisms for parental participation, and decentralized school management. There is growing momentum to redefine the responsibilities of local and central governments and promote the development of new decision-making processes, including decentralization, school autonomy, privatization, and community participation.

3. Too Little Investment Per Pupil in Primary and Secondary Schools

Although LAC governments, on average invest 4.6% of GNP in education each year—above the developing country average of 3.9%, funds invested per student are relatively low. Latin America invests, per pupil, at best one-half as much (i.e., Chile) as do developed countries and,

<i>Jamaica</i>	<i>11 to 1</i>
<i>Brazil</i>	<i>8 ¼ to 1</i>
<i>Paraguay</i>	<i>8 to 1</i>
<i>Guatemala</i>	<i>5 ½ to 1</i>
<i>Honduras</i>	<i>5 to 1</i>
<i>Peru</i>	<i>3 to 1</i>
<i>USA</i>	<i>1 to 1</i>

at worst, 1/25th as much (i.e., El Salvador). With such vast differences, LAC governments cannot prepare their students to compete in the global economy. Furthermore, governments tend to over-invest in higher education and under-invest in primary and secondary education—in part because of the greater political clout of university students. Whereas developed countries invest almost equally per student at the two levels, most Latin American countries invest at least twice as much at the upper level. Given the large number of children

in most LAC countries who fail to graduate from primary school, and even fewer who enter and complete secondary, such heavy public investments in university education seem unwarranted. For those among the poor who manage to complete primary school, the priority should be to make it easier for them to acquire a secondary education.

Within this context, Central America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic) stands out as the sub-region with the poorest investment per-pupil, rates. Not only do most Central American countries compare poorly with the rest of Latin America, but they compare even worse with high-growth countries elsewhere.

4. Poor Teaching

Teachers tend to be poorly trained, poorly paid, and poorly managed. Most have significantly less education than their counterparts in developed countries and primary school teachers often have even less. Very few have completed a university degree and a growing number of teachers have no training at all. The education teachers do receive is usually of poor quality - with too much emphasis on theory, too little on classroom practice, and insufficient preparation in specific subjects like reading, mathematics and science. Teacher salaries are not high enough to attract the best candidates, and do not reward good teaching. Tools such as teacher evaluations, keying salaries to performance, and enabling principals to remove incompetent teachers from their jobs are almost non-existent. Moreover, in many countries, teachers' unions tend to resist efforts to establish local control, greater accountability, and incentives for performance. The result is that teaching is not a highly respected profession. Prestige and morale are weak and performance is mediocre.

B. Poor Teaching and School Management

There is a pressing need to improve teaching and school management. Raising the quality of teaching and school management is critical to improving the quality of public schools, particularly those that serve the poorest populations. But teachers and principals are not well prepared. Pre-service training is generally of low quality. Short training schedules and highly theoretical curriculum often sacrifice the classroom practice and subject matter preparation that make for better teachers. Too little attention is given to teaching techniques appropriate for teaching disadvantaged students (including indigenous and minority populations). Teaching salaries are controversial and complex. On the one hand, teachers in many countries appear to earn as much or more than professionals with similar amounts of education and experience, once the length of the working day and vacations have been taken into consideration. On the other hand, compensation systems are clearly not producing the kind of teaching excellence needed. Plus, there are no ways to reward good teachers and principals. Teachers have little control over materials and school management. They are not directly accountable to parents and local communities for their work.

Good teaching requires good teachers, who in turn require good training, good management and good pay. Unfortunately, teachers in Latin America tend to be poorly trained, poorly managed and poorly paid, making it very hard for them to do their jobs well.

Teachers' unions have concentrated almost entirely on raising wages. With few exceptions, they have not played an important role in efforts to improve learning. Overall, the cadre of teachers

throughout the LAC region are poorly trained, unmotivated, and demoralized. This is compounded by the poor quality of the elementary and high school education that many—if not most—aspiring teachers receive prior to entering training programs. The education systems of LAC are doing a poor job of attracting the right people into teaching or raising the level of those teachers already in the classroom.

As a result, many Latin American and Caribbean countries are turning to in-service training as a way to make up for the inadequacies of traditional pre-service teacher preparation. Unfortunately, most in-service programs are short, isolated from the demands of classroom and community, not well monitored for quality and relevance, and have minimal impact on improving the skills of most teachers. Training—the most common and uncontroversial policy aimed at dealing with the quality of teaching—has had relatively little impact in most LAC countries, particularly in light of the substantial investments made over the past two decades by international donors, including USAID, and the banks. On the positive side, however, there is now a better understanding of the problems of conventional teacher training programs, and numerous innovations flourish in the field.

Some countries are making an attempt to strengthen the skills of their national cadre of teachers. Examples of country initiatives include the Uruguayan Regional Teachers' Centers Program and Peru's Teaching Capacity Program. The first helps promote equity by attracting more qualified trainees to outlying areas through the provision of scholarships for a residential teacher pre-service training program, and then guarantees teaching positions to graduates. Teacher dropout rates associated with this program have reduced by more than 40 percent. In Peru follow-up and support activities are emphasized to help reinforce lessons learned in training and encourage their implementation in the classroom. These follow-up activities are expected to become permanent components of the teacher education system in the near future. Not surprising, many of the country initiatives targeting teacher training are typically being implemented in the larger countries that have a slightly better education system.

There is full agreement that training for teachers and school administrators needs to be radically reorganized. Teachers need continuous opportunities for learning in order to review and renew their classroom practices in support of the active learning process critical to student learning. To ensure that school personnel are well prepared and capable, it is essential to substantially improve teacher education. This urgent need to consider new ways of designing training programs that produce effective pedagogic practices and improve the teaching profession is one of the most significant challenges to improving the education systems of the region. This requires a substantial investment in top-quality, in-service training and increased emphasis on finding solutions and sharing successes.

At the third Summit of the Americas US President Bush announced a new regional initiative—*Creating Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training*—to strengthen the capacity of three existing teacher training institutions in each of the sub-regions to serve as regional teacher training and resource centers thereby boosting the quality of teaching and school administration to improve the quality of early instruction in the classroom throughout the hemisphere. Special emphasis is to be placed on poorer countries and the school personnel who work in disadvantaged communities. Perhaps the largest regional initiative targeting teacher and school administrator training to date, this program holds great potential for stimulating momentum for

change and for bringing many of the recent best practices together in an effort to improve professional development and teacher support networks.

C. Low Levels of Education and the Lack of a Skilled and Flexible Workforce

<i>Education Level of Labor Force</i>	
<i>OECD countries</i>	<i>11.1 years</i>
<i>East Asia</i>	<i>8.1 years</i>
<i>LAC</i>	<i>5.4 years</i>
<small>UNDP, 1994</small>	

The gap in educational performance and competitiveness between LAC and other regions of the world is widening. It can be said that the competitiveness and growth rate of a country are closely tied to the share of its people receiving education and, most importantly, to the level of educational attainment. The deficiencies of the education systems throughout the region result in a low level of education and

today the average 25 year-old has only five years of schooling- less than half of the education of OECD countries. The gap between the education of workers in LAC and the rest of the world may widen because many of the OECD countries are aiming to increase the educational attainment of their labor force over the next decade. Faced with the new global economy, LAC countries are increasing their demand for workers with higher education qualifications. Achieving this will require dramatically increasing the number of people who acquire secondary schooling and relevant training for today's workforce. The challenge is significant and urgent. Education cannot remain separate from the workplace.

The workplace is undergoing profound changes in its content and distribution across economic sectors. A growing number of jobs require people who can read and understand technical information, use computers, and adapt to careers that will change radically over time. These changes in the labor markets increase the importance of developing creativity, initiative, and flexibility in students so they can solve the ambiguous, changing problems posed by the world of work. This growing demand for educated workers is also putting considerable pressure on governments to expand the higher education sector, the very sector already receiving the greater portion of national education budgets and that is benefiting primarily the rich. There is thus a danger that the poor, who are already in a vulnerable position in society, will be further disadvantaged unless major efforts are made to ensure that they have educational and training opportunities beyond primary school.

Because the last three decade have been a period of investment in primary education, today the expanding population of children who have benefited from the investment in primary education are creating upward pressure on governments to address the issues of access and quality of secondary education, especially lower or junior secondary. Even the focus of the "Education For All" declaration is being redefined to include youth up to 15 years of age (from 12) and the basic education focus is now defined to include grades 1-9. Lack of access to middle school or lower secondary education is often cited by parents as a reason for allowing their children to drop out of school without completing primary education. In addition to access, the relevance and quality of secondary education for students not intending to continue on to higher education has become an increasing concern of the business community and civil society as a whole.

Secondary education in LAC remains the "forgotten" level in most education systems. More pressing and visible needs associated with basic primary education help to focus the attention of

governments, donors, and international organizations at the primary level. International comparison reveals that exclusive emphasis on primary schooling may leave countries with a labor force that is educationally behind the anticipated level of industrial transformation and far behind the technology revolution of the world. Currently, secondary education is not achieving its goals. Gross enrollment is low (55%), and net enrollment even lower (less than 40%). Completion rates are abysmal. Learning is of poor quality and inadequate by international standards. Teachers are poorly trained and unmotivated, and in some countries up to 50 percent are uncertified. Learning curriculum and materials are traditional and for the most part not relevant to the skills students will need to enter the workforce. As in primary education, the underlying problems across the region are low quality of education and low learning achievements.

The LAC region has been a leader in introducing innovative approaches, such as the use of television to reach rural children. This has been effective for expanding access. In Mexico Telesecundaria Schools use a combination of distance learning technology and site-based learning to overcome teacher shortages in rural areas. Similar programs are being implemented in El Salvador and Panama and being considered for Honduras. Other examples of innovation include USAID's-assisted alternative primary and lower secondary education system, *Educadores*, in Honduras, *Conexiones* in Colombia, *PRONET* in Peru, and *la nina* in Guatemala. Despite efforts to seek solutions there has been uneven development and innovation in secondary education across countries. In Chile, for example, only 4 of 10 children (40%) had access to education in 1970. Today, 8 of 10 Chilean children (80%) are participating in secondary school. Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador are other examples of countries that have doubled secondary education enrollment over the past thirty years. Yet, in Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and the Dominican Republic enrollment in secondary education remains below 40 percent.

An important dimension of secondary education in most countries is technical-vocational education. This varies greatly across the region in modalities, academic/vocational mix, secondary/post-secondary balance, funding, and quality. Technical-vocational education with an occupational and apprenticeship orientation is often an alternative to general academic secondary education. Segmented labor markets and demands for cutting-edge skills, however, are stretching existing capacities. Issues of quality, relevance, resources, accreditation, and public-private mix are paramount. Recently, however, technical-vocational education is receiving greater attention from governments and the private sector. Still, there is a pressing need for new, innovative training mechanisms that are supported by public-private partnerships and that provide skills relevant to the demands of the high-tech workplace. Private sector, higher-level skill training hasn't been encouraged to expand and the traditional training, primarily carried out by public institutions, has not proven successful.

In LAC countries, public training programs, especially pre-employment training programs, have not responded well to the signals of the local labor market. Linkages with employers have traditionally been weak and training objectives have been inappropriate. The role of government as a training provider remains highly questionable. Training curricula developed by public institutions typically do not effectively identify local training needs, nor can they make it cost efficient. Consequently, too many participants of these programs have received training in skills that are not required by local employers. Private training can meet an important share of skills

needs without public financing. Most of this training is considered to be of superior quality to publicly provided training because of its market-oriented nature. However, private organizations are frequently encumbered by excessive government regulations (e.g., ceilings on tuition), which reduce the flexibility of the private institution. Furthermore, student loans are seldom available for this type of technological training, so that those who enroll are the ones who can afford to pay, thus denying even limited training opportunities to the many talented, but poor, youth of the region.

In summary, what is clear from the above is that access to secondary education in the region is inadequate, especially in Central America and the Dominican Republic; the traditional approach of providing secondary education requires fundamental changes; schools are producing neither the quantity of graduates nor the quality of education required for successful competition in a global economy; and if anything, schools are reinforcing inequality rather than reducing it. Although there have been some efforts to address these major shortcomings, much more is urgently needed. Because investment in secondary education may require larger allocations from the government than those required for primary education, secondary education needs to be considered beyond its intrinsic value. Prioritizing secondary education within limited national budgets thus implies looking outside of the school sphere at what increased quality and access could positively impact: labor markets, national economic competitiveness, employment of the poor, adolescent health, and the strengthening of national social capital and democracy.

IV. Building on Results

Since 1996, LAC/RSD/EHR has proven to be the region's most prominent partner in support of education policy reform. The current education strategic objective has supported The Partnership for Educational Revitalization In the Americas (PREAL), an initiative aimed at building a broad and active constituency for education reform in many countries. Over the past five years PREAL has become the leading non-governmental voice on education in Latin America and a strong advocate for involving leaders from civil society in the work of education reform. PREAL's catalytic role directly influenced the education agenda and recommendations of the 1998 Summit of the Americas. A blue-ribbon Task Force guides the program on Education, Equity and Economic Competitiveness composed of corporate CEOs, prominent political leaders, and distinguished scholars. Working through a region-wide network of expert policy centers, PREAL has sought to improve quality and equity of education by promoting better education policy through: 1) building public and private sector support for education reform; 2) strengthening public and private sector organizations working for educational improvement; and 3) identifying and disseminating best education practices.

PREAL has been credited with producing the most comprehensive publications to date on education problems and recommendations for change. The *Future at Stake* and *Tomorrow is Too Late* are two examples of reports that have informed and shaped the policy debate on education throughout the region. Several effective dialogue, communication, and analytical tools for promoting education policy reform among business leaders, government officials and academic leaders have been developed and are being effectively applied to create a cadre of advocates at

the highest levels throughout the region. Under the current SO, the Central American Report Card, a mechanism to document the successes and failures of education and identify areas for improvement, was conceptualized and developed. The rational articulation, analytical efforts and debate techniques used by PREAL are proving effective with targeted bureaucratic and entrepreneurial interlocutors and will remain a key component of the proposed new Strategic Objective. Major accomplishments of PREAL have included:

- Establishment of a 24-institution network to work on education reform in 16 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic).
- Establishment of a multinational Task Force on Education, Equity and Economic Competitiveness in Latin America and the Caribbean that released and distributed a comprehensive report in three languages, entitled *The Future at Stake*, which details Latin America's education problems and makes practical recommendations for change.
- Establishment of a Central American Task Force for Educational Reform composed of influential government, political, business, and academic leaders from seven countries—Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. The Task Force produced a report entitled *Manana es muy tarde* that analyzes the principal problems facing schools in Central America and offers recommendations for change.
- Release of the first edition of a periodic "report card" on education in Latin America, that is intended to monitor progress toward education reform in the region and to reach a non-specialist public.
- Establishment of a program to identify, document, and widely disseminate best education practices that published more than 100 cases.
- Support of region-wide working groups on standards and evaluation, teachers unions, and the politics of reform, each of which has produced and distributed numerous publications.
- Support of region-wide dialogue venues to debate education decentralization, standards and evaluation, finance, business-education partnerships, trends in educational innovations, school autonomy, business and education, teaching profession.

The Strategic Objective also builds upon results learned from two decades of USAID participant training programs (CAPS, CLASP, PTIIC, APSP, CASS), which have specifically targeted disadvantaged youth and females, and provided US-based training in carefully selected fields to ensure employability to those individuals who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to obtain such training. These programs combined, have provided training to more than 300,000 young people from across the LAC region. Today, more than 90 percent of them are employed, and most in their fields of training. Most have also proven to be dynamic leaders in their professions and their communities. While USAID's current participant training program—CASS—is not considered sustainable without donor financing, it continues to provide valuable

training opportunities to disadvantaged youth of the region in high priority areas (i.e. lab technicians, computer maintenance, x-ray repair, quality control, teaching, etc).

PART II: PROPOSED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

V. Rationale for the Proposed Strategic Objective

The proposed Strategic Objective – *Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity & Quality in Education and Training*– builds on the strengths and successes of our current strategy, capitalizes on opportunities to strengthen regional momentum for education and training initiatives resulting from the Summits of the Americas, and addresses the region’s most urgent development challenges for improving the quality and equity of education, which LAC/RSD has identified to be: 1) enhancing the environment needed for policy reform; 2) improving the skills of teachers and school administrators; and 3) improving the relevance and skills of the workforce. These three challenges are the focus of our proposed Intermediate Results.

The strategic objective was chosen because it directly addresses US interests in the region, supports Agency goals, complements the LAC Bureau’s roles and responsibilities, and responds to regional priorities in education. It focuses on activities that are uniquely regional, thereby targeting opportunities that are beyond the purview of bilateral or sub-regional programs. Moreover, it complements the USAID bilateral education programs through its primary focus on strengthening regional initiatives that have great potential for impact at the country level, while at the same time, these initiatives can stimulate, inform, strengthen and guide USAID bilateral programs. The SO-level result was also selected because it can be carried out with the modest level of resources available. Lastly, the Intermediate Results are considered realistic, manageable, and achievable within the five-year strategy period; and have the potential to substantially leverage additional resources, particularly from the development banks.

LAC/RSD/EHR’s strategic plan supports the priorities and commitments that LAC governments, the U.S. and other countries subscribed to in the Summit of the America and the world conferences such as Education For All. The proposed Strategic Objective and its Intermediary Results take advantage of opportunities for genuine collective action in education by building on the last three Summits and the resulting recommended actions for education. The Summit, after all, is a collective exercise, and countries can sometimes do things together that they could not or would not do separately. Supporting and strengthening initiatives at the regional level, such as establishing regional indicators for education or improving the professionalism of teachers, helps to establish clear and measurable goals through regional collaboration and has the potential to energize governments to overcome national obstacles that they would not otherwise take on individually. Of the 10 broad actions agreed to by 34 governments of LAC in 1998, and reiterated at the 2001 Summit in Quebec, four are incorporated into the proposed strategic plan: 1) Develop programs to improve and increase the level of professionalism among teachers; 2) Strengthen preparation, education, and training for the world of work; 3) Establish systems to evaluate the quality of education; and 4) Strengthen education management and decentralization and promote better forms of community and family involvement. Civil society participation, a crosscutting theme of the Third Summit of the Americas, is also a crosscutting theme in this Strategic Objective.

The Strategic Objective is aligned with the LAC Bureau's assistance strategy for the region, and provides a technically sound development tool to assist the LAC Bureau in carrying out its roles and responsibilities in support of national and foreign policy interests. Supporting improved quality and equity in education and training also support LAC objectives across sectors by facilitating opportunities for the poor to obtain greater access to evolving economic opportunities that drive a more competitive economy; positively impacting the health and social mobility of populations; reducing vulnerabilities associated with poverty; and reinforcing and strengthening democratic processes, including strong civil societies and governments that are accountable to their citizens.

LAC basic education programs address these challenges and will increasingly emphasize a second generation of reforms to improve the quality, efficiency, equity and relevance of education. Given the recent commitment of the IDB and World Bank to double education funding to the region over the next five years, USAID is demonstrating and supporting innovative approaches for subsequent replication, in order to help ensure that IFI funding is put to best use. USAID is also fostering close coordination and sustained efforts among the donor community to work toward the Summit education goals.

Currently, eight USAID missions (Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Peru, and the Dominican Republic) are implementing education activities, most of which are focused on innovations to improve discrete components of service delivery. Because resources for education are currently insufficient for systemic impact at the country level, LAC/RSD believes there is a pressing need to be more strategic in focus and to increase bilateral support for education policy reform. Note that although USAID education budgets for the region have been cut significantly (as much as 60 percent) since their well-funded days of the 1980s, most missions have continued to engage in service delivery, though on a much more modest scale than they pursued ten years ago. This is partly a reflection of the fact that policy reform is complex and often politically charged, and usually requires full support of Mission and Embassy leadership to leverage the political changes required. Getting such senior-level leadership has been difficult given that supporting education has been less popular than supporting other sectors over the last decade. Moreover, because there is now such a dearth of direct-hire education officers and only one in the field in the LAC region, those managing education activities are typically not full participants in mission discussions about strategic focus or resource allocations. Thus, there is a need for leadership on the education policy front, and the proposed Strategic Plan has the potential to encourage as well as inform missions through guidance and regional activities to refocus their activities in this area.

The proposed Strategic Objective is influenced by the modest level of resources available, particularly for basic education. Since the huge cuts of the early 1990s, AID funding for education and training has remained at approximately \$30 to \$35 million annually for the region which is about a mere 6% of the total LAC Bureau program budget. Training represents \$10 million of the total and is consolidated into a single regional program. Annual resources for basic education have remained stable at about \$20 to \$25 million. The regional education program, similarly to most of the eight bilateral education programs, is allocated about \$2 to \$4 million annually. The scarcity of resources to systemically address the problems of equity and quality in

education support the strategic focus on strengthening regional initiatives that are in support of the improvement of equity and quality in education and training.

Although the bulk of funding associated with the proposed strategy will support IRs 2 and 3 (the Georgetown University CASS participant training program which is funded at about \$10 million per year and has up until now been a Special Objective, and the New Presidential Initiative, Teacher Training Centers expected to received about \$20 million), these are not considered higher priority than IR1 (focused on improving the environment for education reform). To the contrary, IR1 is considered the centerpiece of the new strategy with its focus on building broad-based constituencies for reform and vaulting education reform to the top of the region's policy agenda.

Finally, LAC/RSD is streamlining the overall regional program and consolidating related activities into fewer strategic objectives. Therefore, education and training are proposed together under this SO.

VI. Development Hypothesis

LAC/RSD/EHR's overarching development hypothesis is that the way to ensure that people are able to take advantage of the potential of globalization, rather than becoming its victims, is to build capacity through education and training. Currently few issues generate greater consensus than the belief that education is the most important determinant of development. No country has achieved significant economic progress without providing quality education to its greater citizenry.

Deficiencies in equal access to a quality education strike hardest at the poor, who spend less time in school, are offered a lower-quality education, and ultimately join the workforce at lower unskilled levels with less pay. A lack of education virtually condemns individuals to a life of poverty. Educational inequities become quite apparent when schooling rates for disadvantaged and higher-income groups are compared.

Equitable access to quality education promotes the development of human potential and helps individuals become productive members of society. It gives individuals the ability to enrich and improve their environment and to collaborate peacefully and responsibly with others. Education reduces mortality and morbidity rates, increases adaptability of individuals in a changing world, and contributes to better decision-making. Democratic stability increases as levels of education rise. Good education is a decisive factor in the quest for equity and the eradication of poverty. Quality education for all is the best formula for improving well-being and social mobility.

While more poor children are getting educated in Latin America than was true a decade or two ago, important inequalities remain in access to the levels that most matter—primary and secondary education. It is primarily the poor who should be made the priority for primary education since the unavailability of schooling for the disadvantaged is the key constraint to raising the human capacity level of the region. Because increasing the number of people who acquire secondary schooling is vital for increasing human capital, and is an important factor in

the future of the region's economic performance, the poor need equal access to a relevant secondary education.

The intermediate results that contribute to the Strategic Objective support regional initiatives that target critical barriers to achieving the larger aim of improving equity and quality throughout the region's education systems. Each of the three IRs addresses distinct shortcomings in the education system—together providing a targeted approach to supporting the goals of the Strategic Objective. **IR1** deals with mobilizing increased support for education reform through efforts to improve the environment for such reform. **IR2** deals with training teachers and administrators, and focuses on improving quality and equity through enhancing the skills of the *providers* of education. **IR3**, deals with the improved relevance of secondary education and skills training for the workforce and specifically targets disadvantaged youth.

A. Improving the Environment for Education Reform

Development Hypothesis: USAID's strategy of improving the policy environment for education reform is based on the hypothesis that policy reform is essential to improving the quality and equity of education systems in the LAC region, and that before this can occur, stakeholders at all levels of society must begin to demand changes. In democratic societies where policy reform is complex, multi-directional, fragmented and rarely linear, an enabling environment comprising—an informed dialogue among diverse public and civil society actors, effective coalitions and advocacy groups, good technical capacity, accountability, and political will—is a prerequisite for education reform to succeed.

Education reform is not an event that can be achieved over a finite period of time. It is instead an ongoing process that must shape and accommodate constant change. Moreover, the following must be achieved:

- Knowledge has to be acquired;
- Demand for change has to be engendered;
- Dialogue has to be initiated;
- Debate has to be informed;
- Relevant national answers have to be obtained;
- Political-economic battles have to be waged;
- Negotiations have to be undertaken;
- Coalitions have to be built; and
- Consensus has to be reached.

This process has to happen again and again. The components or stages are cumulative and *together constitute the environment for policy change*. In the absence of such an environment, education policy change is ad hoc, subject to influence by interest groups who stand to gain from the change, and unlikely to yield effective policy reforms that result in better education for the majority of the society. Efforts to strengthen these critical processes are key to the creation of an enabling environment where key actors and entities can make relevant education reform happen on an ongoing basis. This is the core objective of LAC/RSD's proposed IR1.

Demand-led reform. In most countries, the environment for reform is severely limited by a weak demand for improvements in public education. Key stakeholders—parents, the business community, community leaders and government officials below the national level—have little knowledge about the state of education, and few mechanisms for influencing public schools, much less education policy reform. Worse yet, the poor, who are the main users of public schooling, tend to be less politically organized as constituencies than other sectors of society, and thus, have few avenues to influence public policy. As a result, civil society has played little or no role in education reform, there is a lack of articulate and mobilized constituencies for reform and governments are not being held accountable for implementation of actions agreed to at the Summits or in the contexts of national reform agendas. Increased public demand and consensus on reform priorities are also critically needed since successful education reform requires the participation and collaboration of countless private, as well as public, sector. As people are more likely to participate in reform if the issues involved affect their daily lives, promoting citizen participation at the local level is likely to be more effective and less cumbersome than at the national level. Unfortunately, the demand for reform below the national level is currently severely constrained by a variety of obstacles including: lack of public information and awareness about education reforms agreed to by governments at the Summits; lack of effective mechanisms for disseminating information about education reform priorities to the community level; and no tradition of community level involvement in public education.

Informed Dialogue among Diverse Public and Civil Society Actors. A healthy policy environment requires a cadre of change agents ranging from national political leaders to local government officials and civil society leaders to shape and focus the energies of concerned citizens and foster a dialogue among stakeholders about education issues and solutions. All strata of society must be represented by key actors who can adequately express the needs and concerns of their “constituency groups” (community, parents, students, teachers, teachers unions, businesses, etc.) and serve as catalysts to an informed dialogue. Encouraging business and civil society to work with governments in common effort to improve education is important to the dialogue process. Since successful reforms must be promoted over the tenure of several government administrations, they must be non-partisan and consensus-driven. Furthermore, the participants must have access to reliable information if the dialogue is to be of real value. Identifying and disseminating useful knowledge about education issues, policy analysis, and the innovations and pilots that yield results are, therefore, essential to a healthy, well-informed dialogue. Since many of the key obstacles to change are political (e.g. powerful teachers unions that do not want principals to have more authority over hiring, firing and salaries), it is important that the non-governmental sector (business, political parties, media, parents associations, etc.) act both as a stimulus to change-by pressing governments for reform-and as political allies in change efforts.

Effective Coalitions and Advocacy Groups. Improving the environment for education policy change is difficult and requires a flexible operational framework. The key ingredients include a core group or network with the ability to maneuver the process strategically, an awareness of the changes that need to take place, and the ability to disseminate documentation on reforms. The number of NGOs that specialize in teacher training, design of classroom materials, girls’ education, literacy and non-formal education has increased dramatically over the past twenty years and a recent survey reported more than one hundred NGOs working in education in 18

LAC countries. Many of them participate in the PREAL network but others could be stimulated to become more active in specific reform areas. Effective advocacy networks should include government, NGOs, think tanks, and other interest groups or democracy networks from civil society. Local, national and region-wide networks are needed to promote education reform.

Good Technical Knowledge. Capacity building is essential in overcoming some of the barriers that stand in the way of reform. Clearly, if people have neither the knowledge nor the skills to implement reform, even the best intentioned commitment to reform will not be realized. In most countries, there is a lack of adequate understanding of education issues such as the role that standards and performance measures play in accountability or how centralized control of decision-making for the various school inputs diminish the effectiveness of teachers and principals. In addition, local governments and civil society groups often lack the process oriented, strategic planning and organizational skills needed to operationalize reforms and translate them into actual community level change.

The knowledge necessary to assist policy formulation and its implementation require various technical inputs—including both an understanding of education sector issues as well as strategic planning and policy reform and implementation skills—to ensure sound and effective policy reform. Technical capacity to address the problems in education exists among many groups and organizations throughout the region, but much of it remains untapped. Identifying technical capacity that already exists in the region is essential to determine how to tap these regional resources and what additional capacity may need to be developed. It is unlikely that sound dialogue, compromise and development of realistic solutions can occur if there is no capacity to analyze the critical issues and propose realistic solutions to address them.

Accountability. The ability to measure or assess progress toward the goals and objectives established requires that schools, teachers, principals and the political leaders who influence how schools operate be held accountable for their actions, collectively and individually. Decisions must be made by the collective actors as to how performance will be measured. Reports may need to be published, media may need to be informed, and civil society organizations must be equipped to rally and exert pressure if results are not achieved.

Political Will. In most LAC countries, the education of children is an issue of direct and personal concern to all sectors of the population, as well as to specific interest groups. It is however also an area where vested interest in the status quo by government and other key actors, such as powerful teachers unions, block reform and limit the reform dialogue to little more than lip service. As a result, education reform is a delicate and highly charged political issue.

To date, LAC/RSD/EHR has focused its resources on strengthening policy reform efforts at the national level through PREAL, whose efforts have tended to target higher-level leaders primarily at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. As confirmed in the recent evaluation of PREAL, the process of dialogue has tended to be of exceptionally high quality, high-level, and supply-side focused, and has been extremely effective at raising awareness of high-level public and private sectors leaders about the urgency of education reform. PREAL's work has been instrumental in shaping the education agenda for the Summit of the Americas and its mission to "promote an informed regional dialogue on education policy, make education reform a priority in

the regional agenda, create an environment for consensus, and publicize successful experiences in education” remains timely and relevant. PREAL has also proven highly effective in building consensus among key public and private sector leaders about the key causes of educational deficiencies in the sub-region as well as the type of reforms that are needed to address them. Thus, it is clear that PREAL has helped to build political will.

LAC/RSD/EHR and PREAL, however, recognize that the dialogue on reform must now be expanded beyond the top-level government, business and civil society leaders. While PREAL has effectively nurtured high-level networks which now have a predisposition to experimentation, it has not created an ongoing demand-side pressure for change that cuts up and down the social structure. PREAL’s assessment is that the pace of reform has been disappointing due in large part to a lack of broader public participation and demand for reform. As noted in “*Tomorrow is Too Late*”, a PREAL Task Force publication, “any hope for education reform depends on mobilizing civil society to exert the pressure required to bring about change in the shortest possible time”. The report “calls upon all sectors of society to contribute to a reform movement that will determine the future of their nations.” The support of all sectors is needed to generate enough demand for reform so that politicians and government officials will be forced to develop the political will needed to change education. Moreover, to improve the policy dialogue there is a need to promote public private partnerships and democratic local governance which is necessary to bring about lasting change.

B. Improving the Skills of Teachers and School Administrators

<p><i>Development Hypothesis:</i> USAID’s strategy to create centers of excellence to boost teacher skills and performance is based on the hypothesis that teachers are the most important ingredient for improving quality in the classroom, and school administrators are the most important ingredient for improving overall quality in the school, for mobilizing resources and for managing staff. Together, teachers and administrators can create more effective schools and learning environments.</p>

The most dynamic relationship in education is the interaction between teacher and child. Every other element of the education system merely provides the context within which the teacher and children interact. Thus, school reform must begin with changing teaching behaviors and qualifications, and then building up from there a system to support these positive changes. However, it’s not enough to just focus on improving the skills of teachers, as teachers can only work effectively with the active support of those who employ and supervise them, including school administrators, school boards, and ministries of education.

For this major undertaking to succeed and its benefits to truly extend to all children—most notably the poor—the numbers of adequately trained teachers must be such that the reluctant few have no choice but to join in or leave the system altogether. Experience shows that human beings do react to good training and can become motivated. A change of attitude on the part of the teaching profession is a prerequisite for education reform to succeed. A well-developed training program can significantly contribute to this needed attitude change.

There is a body of research on effective teaching behaviors and school characteristics critical to student achievement. Schools that monitor student progress tend to produce higher achievement than schools that do not track progress. More effective learning requires that schools have a clear academic mission and focus. Effective schools have principals who are strong instructional leaders, are proactive initiators of change, and encourage participation of the entire staff in making change. Unfortunately, in most of the LAC region, effective pedagogical support is absent, and strong training institutions are rare.

Strengthening education by improving the quality of teaching is a daunting task. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that teachers tend to teach in the way that they were taught, and most rural educators have had little experience with textbooks, instructional materials or pedagogical models. Dealing with such issues entails facing some of the most difficult problems involved in governments and societies alike. Such issues are politically and ideologically charged and their financial implications-in almost any scenario-are huge. As a matter of fact, policy interventions aimed directly at influencing teacher quality, with the exception of training, constitute a relatively underdeveloped aspect of education administration.

Training--the most common and uncontroversial policy aimed at dealing with the quality of school administration and teaching--has produced relatively little impact in most Latin American countries, particularly in light of the substantial investments made. Fortunately, there is now a widespread understanding of the problems of conventional teacher training practices, and plenty of innovations available for replication. However, an unbalanced focus for improvement in teacher quality through training practices alone leaves many management issues untouched. Improving the teaching force through interventions that promote parental involvement in the schools and support student assessment and better school management are necessary to enhance accountability, mobilize stakeholders and make the education institutions more responsive and efficient.

The poor quality and lack of relevance of teacher training institutes, combined with patronage systems that may rule against new teachers finding jobs in the education field, suggest that emphasis should be placed on motivating teachers already in the workforce to remain in the basic education system and to upgrade their skills. Teachers and principals are not disinterested and unmotivated in most cases. Rather they are frustrated and discouraged by the lack of infrastructure, few instructional aids, and little if any control over curriculum. They can be motivated through the provision of training and instructional materials that lead to visible improvement in student outcomes

Strengthening existing training institutions to provide innovative and improved training to teachers and school administrators has the potential to raise the level of performance, improve motivation, and ultimately impact on the improved learning and performance of the students they will teach.

C. Improving the Relevance and Skills of the Workforce

Development Hypothesis: USAID's strategy of improving the relevance and skills of the workforce is based on the hypothesis that a productive workforce is dependent upon equitable access to quality basic education and relevant training; and that engaging stakeholders in dialogue about national development goals and educational needs will strengthen the link between secondary education and the workplace. Additionally, providing US-based training to disadvantaged youth in targeted fields of importance to national goals will enhance workforce productivity.

The convergence of two major worldwide trends, globalization and continuous increases in unemployment and underemployment, point to a clear and present need to develop a workforce that supports a country's entry into and grasp on competitive world markets. The alternative is continued destabilization, increased conflict and more dependency as the gap between the developed and less developed nations widens.

Workforce development is a necessary element of any national strategy—without it, essential social and economic growth will be impeded. Well-functioning workforce development systems are integrated decision-making networks of concerned partners from government, industry employers, workers, customers, education, training, and other stakeholders who plan and act collaboratively. Key to workforce development is secondary education, the single most important “training ground” for the range of knowledge and skills needed by any society.

It has long been understood that a major prerequisite for an adequate workforce is a good secondary education system that graduates no less than seventy-five percent of the secondary school population. This, of course, is dependent upon the achievement of universal primary education, followed by equal access to the secondary level. In Latin America and the Caribbean, attainment of these basic prerequisites falls dramatically short of what they need to meet the challenges of global competition. With only a little more than a thirty percent secondary completion rate, and those who do finish school tend to come from families with higher incomes, schools are producing neither the quantity of graduates nor the quality of education required. Instead, secondary schooling is reinforcing inequality rather than reducing it. Today, the average 25 year-old has only five years of schooling which is half of the education of OECD countries. Without a dramatic increase in the number of people who acquire secondary schooling and relevant training for today's workforce the gap between LAC countries' competitiveness and the rest of the world will only widen, and the poor who are already in a vulnerable position will be further disadvantaged.

Because LAC countries are increasing their demand for workers with higher education qualifications, there is a critical need for systemic reform at the secondary school level: changing structures, providing incentives, and realigning school finance patterns. Out of date school models including curriculum and materials that are not relevant to today's modern and highly technical environment, low quality teaching, and socioeconomic “tracking systems” of vocational/technical versus academic education, make secondary schooling unrelated to the world of work and, ultimately, a marginalized societal mechanism available to a very limited population of young people. Policies need to be rooted in lessons learned on what works (has a major impact) and what does not work (has less impact) in terms of improving secondary education.

Secondary education has been placed at the center of the development agenda in the region. The Summit process identified the importance of undertaking secondary education reform by making secondary schooling accessible for 75 percent of young people by 2010 one of its three overarching goals of the region. There is momentum building throughout the region to begin addressing the problems of secondary education, first at the lower level (middle), and then at the upper level. Numerous LAC governments have taken on long-term bank loans to help them tackle the multitude of problems associated with improving the access and relevance of the secondary system. Even with this assistance there is an uneasiness among the LAC governments as how best to proceed. Ministries of education have recently been coming together at the regional level to begin debating realistic solutions to the very complex set of problems they face. The problems they face are similar and lend themselves to open dialogue that expose the problems and facilitates policy options for change. Supporting this regional dialogue around secondary schooling has the potential to motivate technical direction and political will.

D. Crosscutting Themes

There are **three crosscutting themes** integrated into the proposed Strategic Objective: 1) reaching the disadvantaged; 2) enhancing partnerships; and 3) improving civil society participation.

Reaching the Disadvantaged through Education and Training

LAC/RSD proposes to focus on problems of exclusion of a variety of underserved groups, which may include rural and indigenous girls; non-Spanish-speaking indigenous people; African Latinos; street children; children subjected to abusive labor; children affected by natural disasters, war, and violence; refugee children; disabled and handicapped children; youth prostitutes; and young adults working in the informal sector. In many cases, the education needs of these groups require targeted actions that speak to what policy-level interventions can do, and for which there is a lack of institutional settings, appropriate training, suitable materials, and tracking mechanisms to identify those in need.

Youth and young adults constitute a particularly vulnerable group in most LAC countries. For example, despite high levels of universal primary education, youth and adult literacy remain a concern. Illiteracy is the combined outcome of school inefficiencies, social exclusion, poverty, and inequality. The region has over 42 million youth and adult illiterates. Most affected are school dropouts, the urban and rural poor, indigenous youth and adults, and women.

Variations among countries and sub-regions are high. In some countries in Central America, the Caribbean, and the Andean, sub-region illiteracy is more serious and in some cases, getting worse. Adult literacy rates in Honduras, for example, dropped from 27 percent in 1990 to 21 percent in 1998. Guatemala has one of the lowest rates of years of education among women (3 years of schooling), making female illiteracy a critical issue (close to 68 percent of illiterates are women). Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, and Peru have higher rates of illiteracy among indigenous youth and adults.

Within the three proposed IRs, several issues may be targeted for selective attention:

- Promoting official support of non-formal education practices and the role of communities, NGOs, and churches;
- Using distance education in all its forms;
- Identifying factors resulting in high dropout, repetition, and exclusion rates, and introducing a means for the early detection of special learning needs;
- Developing monitoring and quality control systems, and a means to document cases of success;
- Targeting persistent gender disparities, poorest households, and indigenous communities;
- Developing the capacity of education systems to respond to children affected by violence, abusive labor conditions, social conflicts, natural disasters or other special needs (i.e. disabled);
- Applying lessons learned and replicating successful programs;
- Raising awareness among teachers, families, and communities, and improving their training; and
- Integrating education approaches with health, family assistance, and social work programs.

A challenge to improving education in LAC is the ability to adopt comprehensive and flexible assistance approaches to reach a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Thus, for example, approaches to address macro issues of education policy must be complemented with targeted actions to respond to specific needs of disadvantaged groups and communities. Similarly, approaches regional in scope would be enhanced if complemented with country-specific initiatives tailored to respond to culture-specific needs.

Enhancing Partnerships

The regional initiatives and supporting activities in this proposed strategy have great potential for building on existing partnerships and stimulating new alliances with private sector corporations, foundations, universities, training institutes, NGOs and other groups that share common goals and concerns for the education systems of LAC countries. For years USAID's implementing partners have been forging creative relationships with numerous entities, leveraging resources and in-kind support, and mobilizing support for a shared vision of education reform.

Moreover, in support of USAID's new business model for the 21st Century, the Global Development Alliance (GDA), this new Strategic Objective is emphasizing strategic partnerships, and its activities have great potential for leveraging resources as well as ideas and efforts from corporate America, NGOs, and corporate Latin America and the Caribbean. The SO plans to use GDA's three primary approaches for achieving results in the sectoral pillars of USAID: 1) Improve the quality and extent of partnerships with non-governmental organizations; 2) Increase/enhance non-governmental financing of development assistance; and 3) Enhance policy reform through advocacy. Some of the partnership experience is highlighted below:

- PREAL was established in 1995 and funded initially by the Inter-American Development Bank and then by USAID as a multi-year Summit of the Americas' regional initiative. Under the current SO, various collaborations between the IDB, the World Bank, Harvard University, USAID and foundations have supported regional forum on educational issues. To

date, USAID remains the largest contributor and will remain so under this SO, but PREAL is seeking complimentary funding partners such as the Ford Foundation. Potential exists to expand the partnerships.

- The Teacher Training Centers, an effort to strengthen three sub-regional institutions to serve as regional teacher training resource centers, was launched by President Bush as a Presidential Initiative at the 2001 Summit of the Americas in Quebec. With \$20 million in USG support over four years, this estimated \$40 million effort will seek a one-to-one match from the private sector over the next four years. Partnerships will be formed with the USED, State's ECA Bureau, the OAS, Ministries of Education, business and citizen groups, faith-based organizations, international donors and other Summit countries.
- The UNESCO Regional Education Indicators Project, a three-year, phase-one effort to construct a set of basic comparable education indicators for the America, is a region-wide initiative of the Second Summit of the Americas and was specifically agreed to by 24 LAC countries. Led by the Government of Chile and UNESCO, USAID became a financial partner in 2000 along with the Governments of Chile, Canada, Brazil, United States (USED and National Statistics Institute) and Andres Bello. It is likely that depending upon the success of phase one, additional partners will be added.
- The Georgetown University Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships, a Congressional Directive to provide paraprofessional two-year scholarships to disadvantaged youth from LAC, has formed, since 1989, created partnerships with 73 U.S. Colleges, Community Colleges, and technical institutes. More than \$1.6 million is leveraged annually to compliment its annual budget of \$10 million from USAID.

Improving Civil Society Participation

In this strategy, LAC/RSD proposes to focus on the expansion of the regional dialogue on education reform beyond the high-level networks on which PREAL has concentrated to the various stakeholders in education and larger civil society, including parents, students, teachers, unions, school administrators and local/regional government. One of the main policy themes of the LAC/RSD program will be to transform the traditional, centralized model of school management into one that places greater responsibility in the hands of local communities and parents. LAC/RSD hopes to capitalize on the growing momentum underway in the region to promote new decision-making processes, including decentralization, school autonomy, privatization, and community participation. As a result, one of the crosscutting themes of this program is improving civil society participation—one of the main themes of the Quebec Summit of the Americas.

VII. Rationale for a Regional Program

The purpose of the Strategic Objective is to improve the equity and quality of basic education by strengthening regional initiatives and institutions under three Intermediate Objectives that: 1) improve the skills of teachers and administrators; 2) improve the relevance and skills of the

workforce; and 3) improve the environment for education reform. The first two of the three Intermediate Objectives expect to work completely on the regional level. The effort to improve the skills and relevance of the workforce will work through a regional participant training program and will establish a regional policy agenda for secondary education reform. The effort to improve the skills of teachers and administrators is a Summit Presidential Initiative and will work as a regional program in each of three sub-regions. Few would question the rationale for these program being included in a regional program.

If there is any area in which questions might be raised about why this program is regional in nature, it may be in the policy area. To address those issues we have, among other things, noted that the regional policy program is a product of a regional initiative (the Summit of the Americas) and that we expect to focus on common, cross-border policy issues. Nevertheless, it may be important to highlight in one place the salient reasons behind the regional rationale for the policy program.

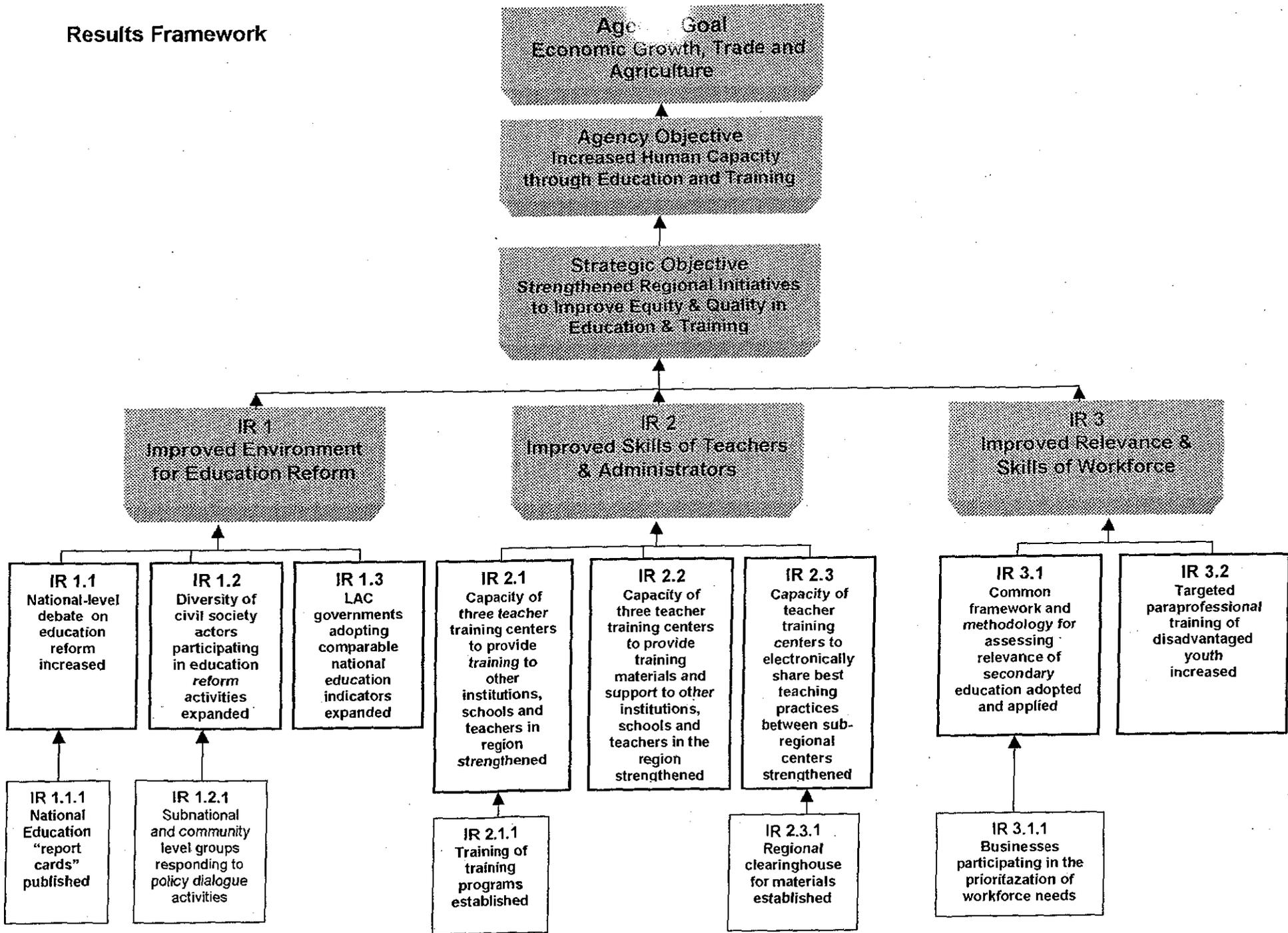
Limited Scope. The purpose of the Strategic Objective is to improve the equity and quality of basic education *by strengthening regional initiatives and institutions*. As such, it is important to keep in mind that the SO is *not* proposing to carry out policy reforms in individual countries because implementing country-specific reforms is not in our manageable interest nor do we have sufficient resources to implement them. Instead, the aim is to help build *regional constituencies* for reform – constituencies that will enhance the *environment* for reform by holding leaders accountable for progress toward the goal established at the Summits of the Americas. We expect to develop these constituencies by informing the policy agenda and mobilizing grassroots civil society and local government throughout the region to help lead the policy debate. In addition, we seek to develop a sustainable regional technical support infrastructure that will provide these nascent organizations with access to regional expertise. Our hypothesis for developing the institutional support structure is that much of the needed expertise already exists in the region but is not tapped because it has not systematically identified, organized into effective cross-border networks or brought to bear on clearly identified community level reform priorities. Moreover, we expect to work through regional organizations and any country-specific activity must have the support of the Mission and must have potential for replication in other countries. If successful, the strategy of creating regional constituencies to carry out policy reform will enable USAID to withdraw from the arena at the end of the program.

Summit of the Americas. The regional program outlined in the strategy emanates from the Miami Summit of the Americas (and was reinforced and ratified by the subsequent two Summits) which called for the development of a consultative forum (PREAL) to address education policy issues in the hemisphere. A recent evaluation of the program found that PREAL had achieved remarkable success but that for the program to result in actual policy changes it *should go beyond* the high-level networks and include greater civil society and lower levels of government at the country level. As a result, the strategy outlines a process in which PREAL will focus more intensely on Central America, the region with the most serious education problems, and deepen its focus to build *regional* institutions that encourage actual policy changes. The aim of the new approach is to bring PREAL's cutting edge research and important Summit and cross-border themes to business and civil society leaders so that educational reform develops a strong constituency and becomes a reality.

Foreign Policy Interests. The strategy proposes to focus its efforts on four themes that were outlined in the PREAL Task Force on Central America, including 1) setting educational standards and evaluating performance; 2) poor teaching and school management; 3) limited school authority and accountability; and 4) too little per-pupil investment. Each of these four themes coincides with the President's priorities for education reform and, through the regional strategy, the program will articulate the Administration's foreign policy objectives. Although some Missions are supporting limited educational reform in their countries, by and large, Missions are engaged in targeted improvements in educational service delivery to disadvantaged populations. Given their limited budgets, Missions are not focused on systemic policy reform and do not have the flexibility to support the cutting edge policy research, the constituency building efforts, and the agenda-setting reform initiatives that support the Administration's foreign policy objectives proposed in this strategy.

Filling a Void. The improvement of education in Latin America is indispensable to achieving the Agency's goals of economic growth, global health and conflict prevention. Over the last five years, the Summit initiative to improve education and address education reform issues has taken root in the PREAL program. Not only does this regional program allow countries to learn from each other, share best practices, and standardize approaches, but most importantly, it allows them to work collectively to overcome major obstacles that might be too politically daunting for national governments to undertake on their own. LAC/RSD, with its five years of experience in education reform is uniquely situated to help lead this process and to leverage major policy changes *working in concert* with bilateral programs. The reality is that without LAC/RSD leadership to push the reform program to regional constituencies and local civil society, education reform will be delayed or will not occur at all.

Results Framework



VIII. Proposed Strategic Objective: Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity and Quality in Education and Training

The Strategic Objective, *Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity and Quality in Education and Training* represents both a continuation, an expansion, and a refinement of the current SO2 “Improved Human Resource Policies Adopted in Selected LAC Countries,” the incorporation of SPO#6 “A Broad Base of Leaders and Potential Leaders in LAC Countries Equipped with Technical Skills, Training and Academic Education,” and the addition of a new Presidential Initiative- -“Regional Teaching Centers of Excellence”--resulting from the 2001 Summit of the Americas. LAC/RSD is combining these three initiatives into one integrated S.O. of supporting regional initiatives that help LAC countries work collaboratively to establish clear and measurable goals and overcome national obstacles to improving the quality and equity of education.

The proposed SO maintains its focus on developing a constituency for reform among a variety of high-level national and regional actors, yet seeks to enhance the education policy reform environment by expanding dialogue beyond the current high-level circles to selected sub-national groups in the greater civil society and local governments. Four of the five key education policy themes promoted in the current SO—revitalization of the teaching profession, improvement of educational standards and indicators, decentralization and increased local control of schools, and increased public investment in basic education—are prominent in the new strategy along with the addition of a new emphasis on making secondary education and skills training more relevant to workforce needs. Complementing this new focus is the initiation of regional forum to assess national development goals and secondary education needs to begin strengthening the linkages. As discussed earlier, three crosscutting themes are incorporated into the three IRs and their supportive activities: 1) reaching out to the disadvantaged; 2) enhancing partnerships; and 3) increasing civil society participation.

The purpose of this SO is to improve the equity and quality of basic education by strengthening regional initiatives that: 1) improve the environment for policy reform; 2) improve skills of teachers and administrators; and 2) improve the relevance and skills of the workforce.

By the end of FY2006, the following conditions and results will be achieved:

At the end of the five-year strategic plan, LAC/RSD would expect that there will be an increased opportunity for the countries of the region to progress toward achieving the goals and the education initiatives of the Summit due to the following:

- 1) increased public demand for change and political will to enact national and sub-national education reform, particularly around the following four themes:
 - a) the failure to set standards and evaluate performance;
 - b) poor teaching and school management;
 - c) limited school authority and accountability; and
 - d) too little per-pupil investment in primary and secondary schools;

- 2) a more viable cadre of teachers and school administrator to ensure real gains in student achievement; and
- 3) a greater understanding and focus on the education policies needed to improve secondary education and workforce training within selected LAC countries.

The achievement of these goals will be measured by: 1) the improved environment for education reform; 2) the improved skills of teachers and school administrators; and 3) the improved relevance and skills of the workforce.

The activities implemented under this SO will complement and reinforce the Agency's Economic Growth, Trade and Agriculture pillar by strengthening the human capacity of the region through improved education and training.

A. Intermediate Results

There are three intermediate results that lead to improved equity and quality in education and training through strengthened regional initiatives. These are:

IR1. Improved Environment for Education Reform

This IR will provide an integrated bottom-up, top-down approach to building, reinforcing, and/or nurturing the capacity of diverse actors to participate in the policy process; reasserting and redefining the role of information in addressing the constraints and solutions to reform that all education systems must confront; creating networks and coalitions that can sustain the dialogue and learning that are essential to educational development; and providing context-specific lessons about what does or does not work—generated from experimentation, innovation and risk-taking. The activities supporting this IR will bring all stakeholders together- policy leaders, presidents, businesses, educators, and ministry officials, as well as civil society (parents, teachers, and youth councils) - to stimulate a reform movement that is better able to exert the pressure required to bring about educational change in the shortest possible time. PREAL will build on its successes in the current Strategic Objective and continue to serve as broker of expertise, practical knowledge and resources on education policy and practice, stimulate informed dialogue among high-level national leaders, identify, communicate and disseminate best policies and practices to opinion leaders in education and other sectors, partner with a network of expert policy institutions and specialists throughout Latin America, and seek additional support from other private sector corporations, foundations, donors, and banks in support of education policy reform in the region.

New activities are being proposed under IR1 that will expand the dialogue and debate on education policy reform to include greater participation from the various strata of society. This new and expanded focus requires careful consideration of how to best engage various actors and groups that operate below the national level and what approaches will result in more demand-led reform efforts. A diagnostic of the potential for participation, advocacy and action in Central America and the Dominican Republic, soon to be carried out by LAC/RSD, will serve to inform

the Bureau about the specific civil society and local government groups to target, what policy tools and techniques to use, and which issues have the greatest potential to stimulate demand-led reform.

Phase II of The Regional Education Indicators Project, an ongoing effort to construct comparable education indicators for the hemisphere, will begin under IR1 in 2003, as Phase I (ongoing until 2003 under current SO) is completed. Building on the initial agreement and Phase I development of 24 indicators representing three categories—context, resources, and performance—Phase II will build consensus for education indicators that reflect quality, equity and social impact. This regional initiative is strengthening national systems of indicators and encouraging their use to assist in education policy formulation.

Illustrative Activities

The illustrative activities that contribute to this IR are PREAL, the G/DG Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT) Activity, UNESCO, the G/HCD Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity and the G/HCD Global Evaluation and Monitoring (GEM) Activity. PREAL will create regional, sub-regional and national-level debates on education reform, builds public and private support for education reform, strengthens regional and national advocacy networks, and expands the understanding of influential stakeholders about the causes of educational deficiencies and the actions necessary to remedy them. PACT will undertake the sub-regional diagnostic to inform the design of the expanded policy dialogue and advocacy to possibly include civil society and local government. UNESCO will construct and publish comparable regional education indicators for quality, equity and social impact. BEPS will provide technical assistance in support of all of the activities in IR1. GEM will serve as the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the IR. Other direct and Global field support mechanisms may be used over the implementation period of this IR.

IR1.1 Increasing Support for Education Reform in and between Countries; Strengthening Organizations Working for Education Improvement; and Researching and Disseminating Best Education Policies and Practices (PREAL)

PREAL will pursue three intermediate objectives: 1) involve civil society in education reform; 2) monitor progress toward improving education; and 3) enrich the thinking of decision-makers and opinion leaders on education policy. Building on its efforts in the current SO, PREAL will seek to build a high-level constituency for education reform by expanding the involvement of key stakeholders, promoting policy dialogue, raising awareness of education problems and progress, and identifying practical policy alternatives. It will operate a consultative forum for civil society, business and government actors, all at the regional and sub-regional level. Task forces, region-wide working groups, support for national advocacy groups, the development of policy networks, conferences, and publications will be supported. The focus will primarily be on Central American countries where preliminary conditions for reform are in place (Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua) and where early reform activities are underway (El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Panama). PREAL will target Brazil for the purpose of establishing links with business groups working on education reform, and continue to translate key

publications into Portuguese. Panama will receive assistance to help the business community play a stronger role in education reform.

In all of its activities, PREAL will concentrate on the four recommendations identified by its Task Force on Education, Equity and Economic Competitiveness in Latin America: 1) set standards for the education system and measure progress toward meeting them; 2) give local communities more control and responsibility for education; 3) strengthen the teaching profession; and 4) invest more money per student in pre-school, primary and secondary education. Particular emphasis will be placed on standards, assessment and strengthening the teaching profession. Transparency and accountability will serve as a common crosscutting theme throughout the implementation. PREAL will significantly expand its efforts to develop activities with business leaders with a goal of encouraging greater participation from them in the education reform effort.

Five types of activities will be supported during the five-year period of implementation: 1) associated centers; 2) task forces; 3) working groups; 4) regional and national report cards; and 5) outreach.

Associated Centers: Through partnerships PREAL will re-engineer its relationship with a network of 22 centers in 17 countries that act as national counterparts in carrying out education reform advocacy functions. Specific reform actions will be targeted in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic.

Task Force: Through the establishment of highly visible and influential individuals that can draw attention to education problems, dialogue will be promoted along with comprehensive report on the status of education. The Task Force will prepare the education "report cards". The continuation of the Central American Task Force is planned.

Working Groups: Through a multinational network of policy specialists, expertise and advice on selected issues will be made available. Working groups for standards and assessment and on teacher unions are currently planned.

Regional and National Report Cards: A progress report on problems and recommended changes with established empirical benchmarks, will be issued for selected countries throughout the implementation period. Two reports cards will be published on Central America.

Outreach: PREAL will continue to produce and disseminate key documents that may help host country reform proponents understand the aims and means of donors who propose certain activities in selected areas. These publications will assist host country officials, particularly in reform-minded, public-interest nongovernmental organizations, and civil society organizations by providing well articulated issues and thus, inspiring options for solutions.

Illustrative performance measurement includes:

- Number of organizations working for education reform
- Number of best practices in education identified and disseminated

- Number of public-private partnerships working for education reform
- Number of education reform initiatives supported
- National education "report cards" published
- Awareness of issues increased (as a result of PREAL's work)
- National-level debate increased (as a result of PREAL's work)
- Education Reform elevated to national agenda (as a result of PREAL's work)
- X% of those participating in PREAL events report that they had made in difference in educational policy or practice in their country(ies)

IR1.2 Supporting expanded Demand-Driven Dialogue to Enhance Education (PACT)

This activity will complement the PREAL policy efforts by expanding the dialogue process in various directions: 1) make it more demand-driven; 2) advocate around particular and specific experimental reform options; and 3) make the advocacy respond to needs from various levels of society. Policy issues center around the four themes proposed by the PREAL Task Force and will focus on Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Because this activity is new it will be implemented in at least two or more phases over the five-year strategy period. Phase I will consist of a diagnostic that will map the environment for reform, including identification of key stakeholder groups and their interests; an inventory of local institutions and groups that can lend analytical and technical support to the reform effort, over the long haul; and the policy dialogue arenas and forums that could be positively enhanced through regional assistance activities. It will consider what assistance will accentuate stakeholder tensions and exploit stakeholder alliances, vulnerabilities and strengths to the advantage of positive and sustainable movement toward overall reform. Specifically the diagnostic will: 1) identify which of the four reform themes identified by PREAL are most likely to motivate broader public engagement in education reform and be more receptive to solutions and interventions; 2) analyze the environment for addressing the reform themes in terms of the political and economic interest of stakeholder groups; and inventory planned efforts that may impact the targeted problem area of concern to USAID bilateral education program or other donors; 3) identify the characteristics of the education policy environment that are shared by countries in the sub-region of Central America; 4) identify alternative strategies that may include work at various levels of government and with civil society groups; and 5) identify tactics, or tools that support regional results.

The diagnostic will provide valuable information that will serve as the basis for the design of the larger effort that will be implemented in parallel with the PREAL activity for the remaining period of the strategy. The resulting activity will be designed to complement PREAL's existing strengths but will target groups below the national level (which is PREAL's primary focus. PHASE I is expected to begin in FY01 and be carried out over a 3-4 month period. Additional activities currently under review for possible implementation include working with mayors, and there are already established mechanisms to work with them through LAC's democracy and governance activities. Moreover, mayors have been strong supporters of decentralization² and are a critical link between local communities and national governments. LAC/RSD is also

² Decentralization is critical for greater accountability of schools to those they are teaching.

considering working at the mid-level with teachers by building a constituency around teachers' unions.

We expect the diagnostic to identify, and possibly test, alternative strategies for moving the policy dialogue beyond the level of national governments and high-level leaders so that we can increase public demand for education reform. We expect these strategies to:

- Include a yet-to-be-determined mix of "civil society" initiatives (in order to build citizen demand for reform and encourage citizens to hold government accountable for performance of public schools, etc.) *and* "good governance/local government" approaches (in order to increase the level of attention devoted by local governments, to education reform and to enhance the knowledge, skills and resources public officials can access to improve public education within their communities, etc.)
- Tap, to the maximum extent feasible, existing organizations and networks identified in collaboration with LAC/RSD's Democracy and Human Rights (DHR) Team's democracy/governance activities, such as networks of Mayors and organizations such as the Federation of Municipal Associations (FEMICA), as well as networks of civil society organizations such as those affiliated with the Partners of the Americas or PREAL.
- Incorporate a variety of programming tools, possibly including: policy marketing; social marketing; other information dissemination techniques; advocacy; policy dialogue; and consensus building.

Through this partnership, we hope to facilitate some or all of the following:

- Inform civil society about the education problems in their countries (often taking the solid research and messages of PREAL to the grassroots levels).
- Assist stakeholders in a country/countries/region to establish a consensus on agendas and strategies for reform; and
- Help stakeholders in a country/countries/region to develop plans for carrying out their strategies.

Pilot activities should lead to policy debate/changes. Additionally, illustrative criteria for funding a country-specific activity might include:

- Activity must have the support/commitment (financial and/or staffing) of the Mission, including the possibility that the Mission might take over management and funding in the future;
- The activity must have potential for expansion, replication or serving as a model for other countries in the region; and/or
- Another donor has indicated that it might fund/expand our model if proven successful.

Illustrative performance measurements include:

- Expanded diversity of civil society actors participating in education reform activities; and

- Number of sub-national and community level groups responding to expanded policy dialogue activities.

IR1.3 Developing Comparable National Education Indicators for Region (UNESCO & TA to Ministries of Education)

Under the current Strategic Objective, USAID is funding UNESCO/OREALC to construct a set of basic comparable education indicators for the Americas to strengthen national systems of indicators, publish the indicators, and encourage their use in assisting education policymaking. This activity attempts to build accountability into education systems by building comparable indicators that form an objective basis for comparisons across countries. This is being done by building on the various sub-regional initiatives already underway and serves to coordinate them into a streamlined set of indicators for the region. Phase I began in FY 2000 and is expected to end in FY 2003. Progress on Phase I will be reported under the current SO but due to its significance and its promise of a second phase, references to it will be incorporated into the documentation of this proposed IR. Under Phase I, 24 indicators have been agreed upon by 24 countries of the hemisphere that are related to three categories:

- Demographic, social, and economic contexts of education and a general description of education systems
- Human and financial resources in education
- Performance of education systems (access, participation, efficiency)

This activity is highly participatory and draws upon the experience of UNESCO, and its newly created, and World Bank-funded, Institute for Statistics, and relies on a consensus-building process with governments of the hemisphere to create a coherent strategy for adopting common methodologies and definitions.

Based on the five UNESCO-proposed categories, countries decided in which categories they wished to participate and agreement was reached in August of 2000 to undertake the first three. Specialists from each participating country are involved in the working groups organized in each category. UNESCO/OREALC acts as the technical secretariat or general coordinator and provides technical assistance to these working groups. The groups meet at least once a year and use the Internet to communicate their decisions regarding which indicators are desirable and feasible for their countries within the proposed categories and the common methodologies adopted for the construction of these indicators. For the information collection phase, OREALC offers coordinated technical assistance to those countries that desire or need support to obtain timely and reliable information. USAID's funds support core activities and support the participation, through technical assistance from OREALC, of USAID presence countries that currently implement education activities. Once the information is collected using the regular UNESCO Institute for Statistics questionnaire, OREALC, in cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, constructs the indicators and then publishes them, along with an analysis of the education situation of the region. The process of creation and modification of the

indicators are considered to be active and constant, and will take a long-range perspective. Phase II will follow a similar iterative process and will tackle some of the more sensitive indicators related to quality and equity. It is expected that Phase II will construct indicators related to three categories:

- Quality of education (to include student achievement)
- Equity (access of marginalized groups to education)
- Social impact of education (may include relationship of education with the labor market, civic behavior, and others)

Support for Phase II of the Regional Education Indicators Project is planned from FY 2003 to FY 2006. Performance measurement for Phase II will be developed prior to its start-up in FY 2003 but may include:

- Number of host governments adopting comparable national education indicators

IR2. Improved Skills of Teachers and Administrators

To address the shortcomings of teaching and school administration highlighted throughout the region, three Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training will be created. The Centers of Excellence will strengthen the capacity of three existing teacher-training institutions (one each in the Caribbean, the Andean region of South America, and Central America) to serve as regional teacher training and resource centers. Their objective will be to boost teacher and school administrator quality and to improve the quality of early instruction in the classroom throughout the hemisphere, with special emphasis on poorer countries and teachers who work in disadvantaged communities.

The focus of the program will be on improving reading instruction and upgrading the knowledge and pedagogical skills of poorly qualified teachers. The project will establish a training-of-trainers program so that teachers and school administrators can take the training back to their communities. The program will also create a clearinghouse of teacher training materials and an Internet Portal linking teacher training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities so that they can share materials, "best practices" and "lessons learned" as well as provide virtual training. It is expected that about 15,000 teachers will benefit from this training over four years.

USAID will design and coordinate the program, with the guidance of an advisory panel of U.S. and Latin experts. Sister U.S. Government Agencies that will lend support to the effort including United States Department of Education (USED) and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Education and Cultural, Affaires (ECA). In addition, the Organization of American States (OAS), Ministries of Education, business and citizen groups, faith-based organizations, international donors, and other Summit countries will be enlisted to form a partnership with USAID for the implementation of the program estimated to cost \$40 million over 4 years. The USG will invest \$10 million in the first year.

Because each sub-region has different teacher training needs and each institution USAID selects to work with in each sub-region is likely to have different institutional capacity, the program is likely to entail three separate designs. To address this, LAC/RSD is conducting a needs assessment and an institutional capacity assessment in each of the sub-regions. Once the assessments for each region are completed, USAID will work with USED, ECA, OAS, universities, business and private voluntary organizations, other Summit countries, foundations and other donors to determine what resources and expertise they can bring to address the problems identified. Some of the activities carried out under the program will be undertaken by the host institutions and governments, others will be carried out by contractors hired under competitive bidding procedures, while others will be provided by private sector foundations, businesses and USG Agencies. As a result, the development of each Center of Excellence is likely to entail a series of grants, Cooperative Agreements, Contracts and Inter-Agency Agreements and USAID will, therefore, employ a Management Contractor to coordinate program implementation and to ensure that the desired results are achieved.

Illustrative Activities

This activity is new and under design. While the design will inform the details of the activity, it is known that BEPS and GEM will contribute to this IR. BEPS will undertake the predesign and assessment work. GEM will design the activity and serve as the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for this IR. Other grants, contracts and G field support mechanisms may be utilized in the implementation of this activity. The program is likely to have three sub-IRs.

IR 2.1: Strengthen Capacity of Three Teacher Training Centers Providing Training to other Teacher Training Institutions, Schools and Teachers in the Sub-region.

Each of the three sub-regional Centers of Excellence will provide on-site, in-service training programs for teachers in their sub-region. The in-service training programs will focus on improving reading instruction but will also offer other programs and guidance related to school and classroom management, math instruction, and involving parents and civil society in the education of children. The cadre of teachers trained in the program will become "multipliers" of the techniques learned when they return to their communities and they will encourage other teachers in their communities to take virtual courses offered by the Center of Excellence over the internet. In addition, each of the Centers of Excellence will work with outstanding U.S. universities in the field of reading education. The program will also seek to forge strategic alliances with universities in more developed Summit countries of the sub-region (Mexico in Central America) to capture the best practices of those institutions.

IR 2.2: Strengthen Capacity of Three Teacher Resource Centers Providing Training Materials Support to other Teacher Training Institutions, Schools and Teachers in the Sub-region.

Each of the sub-regional Centers of Excellence will be a clearinghouse of lessons learned, best practices and innovative teaching materials, especially for reading instruction. The Centers will work with other teacher training institutions in the region to distribute these materials to teachers and school administrators and provide instruction in the effective use of those materials.

Moreover, the Centers will maintain a library of these materials and best practices, which teachers, teachers in training, and parents can access online or through more traditional channels.

IR 2.3: Strengthen Capacity of Teacher Training Institutions, Schools and Teachers to Electronically Share Best Teaching Practices and Training Materials Among and Between Sub-regions and the Hemisphere.

The aim of the program will be to use a variety of educational technology to introduce teachers to best teaching practices, especially in reading. For example, each sub-regional Center will establish an Internet portal, which will enable teachers in training at other institutions in the sub-region and teachers with access to Internet service in their communities to access both training programs and innovative training materials online. The program will also work with local businesses and civil society organizations to establish Internet access for teachers in remote or disadvantaged communities. Television or radio may also be used, where appropriate.

Illustrative performance measurements include:

- Training and resource centers established and providing services
- Training-of-trainers program established
- Number of teachers and administrator trained
- Post-training test scores show improvement in teachers' skills in teaching reading and other subjects
- Post-training test scores show improvement in school administration and management skills
- Regional clearinghouse for teacher training materials established and providing services
- Internet portal (linking teacher training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities) for the sharing of "best practices" and provision of virtual training to teachers and administrators established and providing services

IR3. Improved Relevance and Skills of Workforce

This IR will have a two-pronged approach to improving the relevance and skills of the workforce and will include both education and training activities. Because of the pressing problems with low educational attainment and the resulting impact this has on the workforce needs, a new activity is proposed that will launch an initiative—Regional Forum for the Improvement of Secondary Education in Central America—supporting strengthened and more equitable secondary education throughout the region. Initial research and regional roundtables were collaboratively carried out by the IDB, World Bank, and the Academy for Educational Development to address key issues that countries are facing as they seek to expand and improve their systems of post-primary education. Reports that formulate issues and approaches related to secondary education are soon to be released. Further, the IDB with AED, established a network of vice ministers through LAC to address issues of secondary education, which has stimulated great interest among the governments of the region. Complementing this initiative on secondary education will be the Georgetown University CASS participant training program that provides paraprofessional scholarships to disadvantaged youth.

The Regional Forum for the Improvement of Secondary Education is planned over a three-year period, beginning in FY 2001 and ending in FY 2003. It is anticipated that a follow-on activity will be needed, but the nature of that activity won't be known until the initiative has been underway for at least a year.

The Georgetown CASS program is currently operating under a Special Objective through FY 2003, with its final funding in FY 2002. The CASS program will begin under this new SO in FY 2003 and end in FY 2006. The future focus of the CASS program will be determined based upon discussions with Georgetown University following an evaluation, scheduled for the fall of 2001, that will serve to inform both parties about the successes of the current program and possible future directions.

Illustrative Activities

The activities that contribute to this IR are the Global Civil Society Strengthening Project (GCSS), Georgetown University's Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS), Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS), and Global Monitoring and Evaluation (GEM). GCSS, led by the Academy for Educational Development, will create a regional forum comprised of government education leaders, private sector business representatives, and NGO stakeholders to address obstacles and solutions to expanding enrollment and improving relevance of secondary education. CASS, led by Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education and Development, will provide paraprofessional two-year scholarships to disadvantaged youth demonstrating leadership skills. BEPS will provide technical assistance in support of the regional forum for secondary education. GEM will serve as the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the IR. Other Global field support mechanisms will be used over the implementation period of this IR.

IR3.1 Creating a Regional Forum to Promote Access to Quality Secondary Education throughout Region (GCSS)

GCSS builds on the research and regional roundtables initiated a year ago by the IDB, the World Bank, and the Academy for Educational Development that began to address obstacles and solutions to expanding enrollment and improving the relevance of secondary education by launching a new initiative—*Regional Forum for the Improvement of Secondary Education in Central America and the Caribbean*—that includes a structured dialogue among targeted stakeholders to facilitate the assessment and targeting of actions needed to make improvements. *The Regional Forum for the Improvement of Secondary Education in Central America and the Caribbean* has three intermediate objectives: 1) develop a regional framework for assessing education needs and priorities; 2) define national priorities and operational frameworks for reforming secondary education; and 3) strengthen the relationship between Government and civil society, especially business/private sector. Stakeholders will include the existing forum of education vice ministers, business representatives, NGOs, and educators.

The Forum will primarily target Central American countries where school enrollment at the post-primary level is expanding and resulting in pressure to prioritize secondary education within limited national budgets (Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican

Republic). A Forum among these countries will permit a broader platform that includes structured dialogue around common problems that can be addressed collectively.

The framework to be used to guide initial discussion within each country and at the regional level is expected to be modified during the implementation but will include two primary components: 1) the stages in national reform of secondary education and; 2) the critical dimensions in secondary education. Stages in national reform of secondary education will address:

- Awareness, Information and Communication
- Needs Assessment and Analysis
- Policies and Strategy
- National Concurrence and political will
- Operation and Application

The critical dimensions in secondary education will address access, relevance, quality and governance of secondary education.

The Regional Forum for the Improvement of Secondary Education in Central America and the Caribbean will be implemented in three phases over a two-year period. Phase One will include a rapid assessment of secondary education in each of the participating countries along with an initial regional workshop to present the findings, and introduce the framework and strategy. Phase Two will identify constituency groups and begin dialogue based on assessment of national development goals and educational needs. Phase Three will define priorities and build support for reform in secondary education. Regional workshops will be a tool of each of the phases.

Based upon the achievements of this new initiative over the next two-years, additional support to the regional forum will be considered.

Illustrative performance measurement include:

- A common framework and methodology for assessing relevance and quality of secondary education agreed upon and applied.
- Priority areas for secondary education investment or reform identified and agreed upon by Forum participants.
- Priority areas for secondary education reform selected by each country.
- Sub-sector investment plans developed by each country.
- Operational structures in place to assure ongoing collaboration between MOE and stakeholders.
- Number of businesses participating in the prioritization of workforce needs.

IR3.2 Providing Para-Professional Two-year Scholarships to Disadvantaged Youth (Georgetown U. —CASS)

The U.S.-based CASS (Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships) training program is a particularly effective vehicle for strengthening societal commitment to the understanding of free

enterprise and democratic pluralism. The combination of exposure to democratic values and institutions and their practical application in economic development, technical-skills transfer, and establishment of human and institutional linkages are a potent catalyst for social and economic change. This fact is borne out by past program accomplishments and CASS's continued high performance.

The purpose of this activity is to equip a broad-based cadre of leaders and potential leaders in LAC countries with technical skills, training, and academic education, and an appreciation for and understanding of the workings of a free enterprise economy in a democratic society. Direct beneficiaries of this program are women, disadvantaged populations and other previously excluded groups in developing countries. These groups and individuals constitute the human resource base of their nations. The objective also endeavors to identify and recruit scholarship candidates who have demonstrated leadership potential, but who are clearly unable to obtain their educational objective in the United States without scholarship assistance. Indirect beneficiaries are the various ministries and organizations that have sponsored participants for U.S. training.

The CASS program, implemented by Georgetown University since 1985, focuses training to meet human resource development needs of LAC countries for technical expertise (e.g., in business-related areas such as agribusiness, small business management, industrial maintenance administration; environmental subjects including forestry and fisheries management; and in health care including facilities administration and food science technology). In addition, the CASS training program aims to instill attitudes and beliefs of responsibility and initiative in participating scholars. These values often lead to a greater sense of commitment to family, community and country. The dedication and leadership potential of the CASS long-term students is reflected in their average GPA of 3.34. Further, CASS has successfully met the objectives of incorporating women, rural, indigenous, and disabled people into training programs, with 95 percent of participants successfully completing their training programs since the inception of the program. While CASS male alumni have consistently maintained an average 75 percent employment in their field of study, CASS female alumni are closing the gap in employment, having increased from 59 percent employment in their field of study in 1985 to 71 percent in 1999. Finally, CASS supported the reconstruction needs of the region following Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and trained construction foremen from hurricane-affected countries.

The current CASS program will continue under the current SO until the end of FY 2002. It is anticipated that a new Cooperative Agreement will be entered into for the continuation beginning in FY 2003. An evaluation of the CASS program is planned for early FY 2001 which will serve to inform us and Georgetown of those components that have proven successful and that should be continued.

Illustrative performance measurements include:

- X% of CASS graduates are employed (broken down by male/female)
- X% of CASS graduates are employed in their field of study (broken down by male/female)
- X% of CASS graduates are involved in community service (broken down by male/female)
- X% of CASS graduates are involved in civil society (broken down by male/female)

- X% of employers of CASS graduates believe the CASS training has enhanced the quality of products/services produced by their firm/organization

PART III: ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS SUPPORTING THE SO FORMULATION

IX. Customers

LAC/RSD/EHR has two sets of customers. Our ultimate customers are those citizens (children, youth, and members of civil society) of the LAC region whose lives will be improved as a result of USAID-supported programs. Our intermediate customers and partners are the organizations with which we will work to carry out our program.

The direct beneficiaries of our activities are school-aged children in the LAC region, especially those in primary and lower secondary grades and in particular children of disadvantaged communities or other previously excluded groups. Parents, teachers and school administrators are also beneficiaries. Other customers include: host country governments which will provide higher quality, cost-effective services; the private sector which will draw on a better educated, more productive labor force; the United States which will gain better trading partners and more affluent customers for its products; and the hemisphere at large, which will be more equitable and politically stable.

X. Proposed Performance Measurement

Illustrative Performance Measurement	Illustrative Targets (under development)
SO1: Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity and Quality in Education and Training	
IR 1: Improved environment for education reform	
1.1 National-level of debate on education increased	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
1.1.1 National education "Report Cards" published	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
1.1.2 Number of organizations working for education reform	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
1.2 Diversity of civil society actors participating in education reform activities expanded	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
1.2.1 Subnational and community level networks responding to policy dialogue activities	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
1.3 Number of LAC governments adopting comparable national education indicators increased	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
IR 2: Improved skills of teachers and administrators	
2.1 Capacity of three teachers training centers to provide training to other institutions, schools and teachers in region strengthened	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
2.1.1 Training of training programs established	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
2.2 Capacity of three teacher training centers to provide training materials and support to other institutions, schools and teachers in the region strengthened	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):

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2.3 Capacity of teacher training centers to electronically share best teaching practices between sub-regional centers strengthened	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
2.3.1 Regional clearinghouse for materials established	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
IR3: Improved relevance and skills of the workforce	
3.1 Common framework and methodology for assessing relevance of secondary education adopted and applied	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
3.1.1 Number of businesses participating in the prioritization of workforce needs	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):
3.2 Targeted paraprofessional training of disadvantaged youth increased	Baseline (2001): Target (2006):

XI. Expected Achievements

Provided that the region enjoys renewed economic growth and political stability for the strategy period, and sufficient resources are made available for USAID/LAC, the strategy will contribute to the achievement of the following results by 2006:

Under SO1:

- Training received at sub-regional resource centers applied in teachers' and administrators' home schools.
- Percentage of teachers selected to attend resource centers coming from poorer countries and/or working in disadvantaged communities.
- Participation in education reform initiatives by civil-society organizations.
- Percentage of CASS graduates placed in relevant employment situations.

Under IR1:

- Training and resource centers established and providing services.
- Training-of-trainers program established.
- Number of teachers and administrators trained.
- Post-training test scores show improvement in teachers' skills in teaching reading and other subjects.
- Post-training test scores show improvement in school administration and management skills.
- Regional clearinghouse for teacher training materials established and providing services.
- Internet portal (linking teacher training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities) for the sharing of "best practices" and provision of virtual training to teachers and administrators established and providing services.

Under IR2:

- Number of organizations working for education reform.
- Number of public-private partnerships working for education reform.
- Number of best practices in education identified and disseminated.

- Number of education reform initiatives supported.
- Regional education “report card” published.
- National education “report cards” published.
- Number of organizations responding to social marketing mechanisms for education reform.
- Number of host governments adapting comparable national education indicators.

Under IR3:

- Number of CASS students.
- Number of “school-to-work” best practices emphasizing workforce development and economic competitiveness identified and supported.

XII. Critical Assumptions

There are five critical assumptions for the LAC/RSD/EHR strategy over the next five years:

- Stable economic conditions;
- The absence of further major disasters in the region;
- Collaborative spirit and interest on the part of civil society to improve social conditions;
- Continuing political will to implement the education initiatives agreed upon during the Summit of the Americas;
- The continued commitment of development banks to provide loans for education reform

XIII. Other Donors and Partners

The LAC regional program regularly collaborates with partners whose extensive budgets and political clout help to effect real policy reform. Collaboration makes effective use of scarce regional resources and often leverages additional funds. Efforts to improve the quality, efficiency and equity of education in the region focus on partnerships among host countries, the private sector, other donors and international organization and NGOs.

Other major donors in the region are the European Commission, Japan, the Netherlands, Germany and the IDB. USAID’s coordination and collaboration with other donors is a critical and expanding focus of its strategy in the LAC region. The primary multilateral partners are the IDB, the World Bank. In particular, LAC/RSD has worked closely with the World Bank and the IDB to develop a common agenda for education policy reform. This trio joined Harvard University to co-finance a workshop on education policy reform for Central America held in El Salvador, and RSD financed a Hemisphere-wide education reform workshop that convened the

USAID and IDB Washington and field staffs for the first time. USAID also works closely to develop programs or policy analyses that will facilitate the larger loans of the Banks. USAID collaborates closely with NGOs (e.g., the Inter-American Dialogue) and international organizations (e.g., UNICEF and UNESCO) and private-sector firms and foundations (e.g., Ford and Gates) to coordinate and implement programs.

The IDB continues to support regional collaboration and is working closely with USAID on follow-up actions associated with the Summit education initiatives. In support of the Summit, the IDB has increased its commitment to \$5 billion and the World Bank to \$3 billion. However, the banks remain concerned that without grant funds, social sector loan recipients will fall short of their commitments. USAID is collaborating with the banks to identify specific areas where USAID can facilitate the loan process, such as undertaking project design and selected applied research. The IDB plans to create a pilot network of virtual schools throughout the region that will share best practices and approve short-term professional exchanges for teachers in support of regional cooperation. Policy reform and distance education remain strong themes with the banks.

On hemispheric educational policy, USAID works with the Inter-American Dialogue, LAC regional institutions and the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). The USDOE is the lead agency in the U.S.-Brazil Partnership in Education; USAID is working with USDOE to facilitate the partnership's objectives to foster policy reform in Brazil.

XIV. Linkages to USG, Summit of the Americas, Agency and Host Region Goals

USG National Interests/ Strategic Goals	ECONOMIC PROSPERITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Promote broad-based growth in developing and transitional economies to raise standards of living and lessen disparities of wealth within and among countries.
Summit of the Americas	Universal access to and completion of quality education.
Agency Framework	Human capacity development through basic education
Primary Link to Agency Strategic Framework	Access to quality basic education for under-served populations, especially for girls and women, expanded Access to economic opportunity for the rural and urban poor expanded and made more equitable

XV. Program Synergies

The following matrix shows how LAC/RSD/EHR's strategic objective and intermediate results will work to advance our overall agency goal of expanding access to quality basic education.

Table 1: Synergies Matrix

Agency Pillars	SO	IR 1	IR 2	IR 3
Economic Growth	X	X	X	X
Global Health	X	X	X	X

Conflict Prevention and Development Relief	X	X	X	X
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XVI. Resource Requirements

A. Overview of Program Resources

In order to accomplish the Strategic Objective outlined above, LAC/RSD/EHR requires a five-year program budget of no less than \$68.486 million. Funding is planned to begin in FY 2001 and end in FY 2005. Annual OYBs vary by total amount, and in some cases, by funding source (see table below) amount.

Funding Source	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004*	FY 2005	Total
CSD (Basic Ed)	4,290	4,355	3,285	3,778	3,778	19,486
DA	0	1,900	10,000	10,000	10,000	31,900
ESF	0	7,000	10,000			17,000
Tota	4,290	13,355	23,285	13,778	13,778	68,486

FY 2002 and FY 2003 based on BJ 2002 submission

* Inflation (15%) is calculated into CSD Basic Ed only for FY 2004

To carryout the Presidential Summit Initiative -Teaching Centers of Excellence- \$20 million is needed. This will include \$17 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF); \$7 million in FY 2002 and \$10 million in FY 2003. The balance of this \$20 million 4-year commitment is planned from Development Assistance funds (DA) and Child Survival and Disease (CSD) -Basic Education funds; \$1.9 million in DA and \$1.1 million in CSD for FY 2002.

Teaching Centers of Excellence

Funding Source	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	Total
CSD (Basic Ed)		1,100				1,100
DA		1,900				1,900
ESF		7,000	10,000			17,000
Total	0	10,000	10,000	0	0	20,000

To carryout the congressional directive, Georgetown University's Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS), \$30 million is needed. While it is currently unknown what the new funding levels will be for the CASS program, the historical levels are used below. This 4-year participant training program requires an annual OYB of \$10 million for FY 2003, FY 2004 and FY 2005. This will include \$10 million in DA funds.

Georgetown CASS

Funding Source	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	Total
DA	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
Total	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000

To carryout education policy dialogue in support of Summit of the Americas' initiatives, approximately \$18.4 million in CSD-Basic Education funds are needed over the five-year strategy period.

Education Policy Dialogue and Reform

Funding Source	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	Total
CSD (Basic Ed)	4,290	3,255	3,285	3,778	3,778	18,386
Total	4,290	3,255	3,285	3,778	3,778	18,386

XVII. Strategic Management

The Education and Training Strategic Objective Team will be led by the Supervisory General Development Officer and comprised of one Program Analyst, two program-funded TAACS (Education), and one program-funded AAAS³.

The tools needed to achieve the Education and Training Strategic Objective include cooperative agreements, grants and policy dialogue. LAC/RSD/EHR will utilize a wide-range of G-Bureau contract mechanisms that manage umbrella grants to local NGOs, and institutions, carryout monitoring and evaluation, provide technical assistance, and other management simplifying tools to achieve the intended development results. RSD/EHR will also coordinate with several partners that include the U.S. Department of Education, Department of State, the Department of Labor and the Organization of American States. Close coordination with mission bilateral education programs will provide synergies and complementarities. Anticipated assistance approaches include technical assistance, training, donor coordination, and mobilizing private sector resources.

The consolidation of the current SO and SpO into this propose Strategic Objective will result in management efficiencies.

XVIII. Sustainability

Under our proposed strategy we are not proposing to be directly accountable for policy reform since (a) we do not have sufficient funding to conduct systemic reform; and (b) it is not in our manageable interest to change policy at the country level. Rather, we propose to assist by enhancing the *environment* for reform. As such, under IR1 we intend to measure sustainability by the adoption of education policy reforms initiated with our support—that is, if one or more organizations take on reform as one of their mandates as a result of USAID assistance.

Sustainability under IR2 may be measured by countries valuing the teacher training enough to undertake the initiative to pay for their own tuition and fees. That is when we will deem the host countries to have assumed ownership of the activity and will consider it to be sustainable.

³ A second Education TAACS Advisor and AAAS scholar are new and will be program funded.

Under IR3, sustainability will be achieved with an improved environment and enhanced systems for secondary education, and as governments begin to subscribe to and support their secondary education sector.

The Georgetown University CASS program is predominately dependent upon USAID support for its continuation and is not viewed as an activity with sustained prospects. At the same time, the education and training received through the program provides long-term and potentially sustainable prospects for both the country where the recipients reside and the future economic opportunities of the trainees.

XIX. Gender Analysis

(A more in-depth analysis is underway that will address specific activities proposed.) The overall goal of the LAC/RSD/EHR strategy for FY 2001-2006 is to strengthen regional initiatives to improve equity and quality in education and training. In support of this goal, the unit will ensure that opportunities are available to all and that the impact of activities is extended to all—including girls and women.

LAC/RSD/EHR believes that gender issues should be fully integrated into our activities and not reported in isolation of other objectives. Therefore, the SO and each IR has attempted to address the following two issues: (1) how gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results; and (2) how proposed results affect the relative status of women. The SO and each IR has taken into account the different roles of men and women, the relationship and balance between them, and the institutional structures that support them. Through our attention to the gender issues that exist in the region, we anticipate that our assistance program will be more equitable, more effective, and, ultimately, more sustainable.

In particular, we will use four main strategies to integrate gender issues into our activities. These strategies are outlined below:

Strategy: Mobilize grassroots participation

Contribution of NGOs and communities has transformed basic education, making the demand for girls' education visible; have demonstrated how obstacles to girls' participation can be successfully addressed; and have generated a groundswell of support for basic education. Community involvement in an era of decentralization has begun to deliver local investments of time, ingenuity, skills and money to complement national public-sector investments. All of these factors augur well for governments' attempts to sustain their investments. In addition, there are potential sources of political, technical and financial support that may not have been tapped. Women's groups, teachers' unions and host-country partners from other sectors might be important sponsors for sustaining the successes of girls' education efforts. We will seek out and work inclusively with grassroots groups and organizations to amplify the gender impact of our activities. We will seek to engage civil society, NGOs, women's groups and communities in dialogue and action to improve girls' education.

Strategy: Engage leadership

Donor inputs may be critical to sustaining outcomes such as increased enrollments. The effectiveness of donor coordination in working with countries to sustain or expand the growth of girls' enrollments will be determined in part by the capabilities and strategies of the parties seated at the table. In designing and implementing our activities, we will engage all donors to coordinate efforts on the issue of gender. We will work to increase dialogue and coordination between donors and governments.

Strategy: Work with a vision

A hallmark of successful girls' education initiatives is a clear vision—shared by donors, governments, NGOs, communities, teachers and parents—of the importance of educating girls and of enrolling every girl in primary school. Where that vision is shared and continuously elucidated from the top of the society down to the classroom, it becomes a social norm, and widespread acceptance, policy and program initiatives and community mobilization follows. In turn, that vision must be translated into a strong policy framework for basic education. Elements of such a framework may be well-trained teachers, strong educational institutions, adequate education budgets, compulsory primary education for girls and boys, and information monitoring for transparent, data-based planning and implementation. We will actively work to infuse our vision for the importance of girls' education into all of our activities. We will promote a clear vision of access, persistence and completion, and work to translate that vision into a concrete policy framework.

Strategy: Improve the quality of education

Worldwide experience has shown that more education for girls is not beneficial unless the education is also better than what is currently available to most girls. Improving the quality of girls' education depends on the ability of leaders, donors and communities to engage in dialogue and reach consensus on educational quality. Policy dialogue about improved educational quality is an important part of our activities. We will continue to develop shared goals and visions of quality, and adopt policies and programs that permit and promote innovation and promote policy dialogue between donors, national governments and communities.