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# EVALUATION

## USAID/Dominican Republic Tri-Project Performance Evaluation Integrated Report

September 9, 2011

This publication was produced by Amex International and its Subcontractor, DevTech Systems Inc., for the United States Agency for International Development under Contract No. RAN-I-00-09-00008-00.



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# USAID/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TRI-PROJECT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION INTEGRATED REPORT

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# USAID/DR TRI-PROJECT EVALUATION: ECONOMIC GROWTH PROGRAM INTEGRATED REPORT

**DISCLAIMER:**

The contents of the following report are the responsibility of the authors and represent our best efforts to complete the SOW given. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors only; we accept responsibility for their accuracy and in no way do these opinions represent the policy of USAID, The Department of State, or the Government of the United States of America.

# CONTENTS

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 1**
- I. INTRODUCTION ..... 8**
  - A. Development Challenge Addressed by the Program and the Projects Evaluated ..... 9
  - B. Program Background: Integration Theme ..... 9
  - C. Geography of the Projects and the Evaluations ..... 14
  - D. Purpose of The Integrated Report ..... 16
- II. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY ..... 16**
- III. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS ..... 17**
  - A. Overall Accomplishments ..... 18
  - B. Critical Analysis ..... 19
- IV. OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION: A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING THE BROAD CLUSTER ..... 22**
  - A. The Broad Cluster Concept: Part of a Solution ..... 23
  - B. Starting a Movement: Cluster Use and Definition In USAID Documentation ..... 23
  - C. Facilitating the Movement: The Next Steps ..... 24
- V. USAID/DR ASSISTANCE MOST URGENTLY NEEDED ..... 25**
  - A. Facilitation of the Broad Cluster Concept ..... 25
  - B. The Probability of the Foundations’ Success ..... 26
  - C. Decision on the Fifth-Year Extensions ..... 27
  - D. Monitoring and Evaluation: Studies And Research ..... 27
- VI. BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED ..... 29**
- VII. THE PROGRAM FIT WITH NEW USAID GCC AND FtF INITIATIVES ..... 29**

**ANNEXES**

**LIST OF FIGURES**

- Figure 1 - The Projects of the USAID/DR Economic Growth Program, 1998-2011 ..... 11
- Figure 2 - Tariffs on Grains - 2005 through 2025 ..... 12
- Figure 3 - Tariffs on Dairy Products - 2005 through 2025 ..... 13
- Figure 4 - Tariffs on Meats - 2005 through 2025 ..... 13
- Figure 5 - Tri-Project Locations Overlay on Sensitive Crops/Products ..... 15

## ACRONYMS

Abt	Abt Associates (Implementing Partner for USAID/RED)
AED	Academy for Educational Development (Implementing Partner for USAID/DSTA)
AMEX	AMEX International
DR-CAFTA	Central American Free Trade Agreement (including the Dominican Republic)
CBI	Caribbean Basin Initiative
CDCT	<i>Consejo Dominicano de Competitividad Turística</i>
CEDAF	Centro para el Desarrollo Agropecuario y Forestal
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CNC	National Competitiveness Board ( <i>Consejo Nacional de Competitividad</i> )
CPP	Dominican Republic Competitiveness and Policy Program
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer (USAID)
DICOEX	Directorate of Foreign Trade (Acronym for the Spanish title)
DR	Dominican Republic
DR-CAFTA IP	Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Project
DSTA	Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance
EEPA	European Economic Partnership Alliance
EPP	Environmental Protection Program <sup>1</sup> the IP is TNC
EU	European Union
FIPA	Investment Fund for Environmental Protection
FtF	Feed the Future
GCCI	Global Climate Change Initiative
GEF	Global Environmental Facility of the World Bank
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSTA	Global Sustainable Tourism (Also DSTA and USAID/DSTA)
GODR	Government of the Dominican Republic
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
INTEC	Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo
ISA	<i>Instituto Superior Agrícola</i>
JAD	<i>Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana</i>
MIS	Management Information System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OTCA	<i>Oficina de Tratados Agrícolas Comerciales</i> (Commercial Agricultural Agreements Office)
PATCA	<i>Proyecto Agrícola de Transición a la Competitividad</i> (Transition to Competitive Agriculture Project)
PBMS	Performance Based Management System
PIP	Parameters Identification Paper
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PRA-Peru	Poverty Reduction and Alleviation Project

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Protection Program Cooperative Agreement No. 517-A-00-09-00106-00.

Program	Refers to the USAID projects and programs from 1998 to present to carry out its Strategic Objective #1
RED	Rural Economic Diversification Project
REDDOM	Dominican Rural Economic Diversification Foundation
REDP	Rural Economic Development Project
SEMARANA	Secretary of State for Environment and Natural Resources
SOW	Scope of Work
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
TA	Technical Assistance
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TNC-EPP	The USAID-Funded Environmental Protection Program managed by TNC
TRI-Project	DR-CAFTA IP, USAID/RED, and USAID/DSTA
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/DR	United States Agency for International Development Mission in the Dominican Republic
USAID/DSTA	USAID-Funded Rural Economic Diversification Project
USAID/RED	USAID-Funded Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance
USG	United States Government

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Integrated Report summarizes findings, conclusions and recommendations from the mid-term performance evaluations of three USAID-sponsored projects implemented for the Mission's Economic Growth (EG) Office. The purpose of the three projects is to contribute to achieving the USAID Strategic Objective of "Increased sustainable economic opportunities for the poor" by attaining the Intermediate Result "Improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican economy."<sup>2</sup>

These projects and their primary areas of activity are:

- *Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Project (DR-CAFTA IP)*: provides technical assistance, logistical support, and training for the organizational strengthening of the Dominican Directorate of Foreign Trade (DICOEX - Acronym in Spanish) and related GODR agencies responsible for implementing compliance with trade treaty commitments.<sup>3</sup>
- *Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance (DSTA) Project*: provides technical assistance, training, and grants to implement a cluster-based approach to developing small and community based enterprises for sustainable and diversified tourism, including nature or ecotourism.<sup>4</sup>
- *Rural Economic Diversification Project (RED)*: provides technical assistance and training to diversify the agricultural sector utilizing a cluster-based approach to development.<sup>5</sup>

The three projects build and expand on an earlier USAID Competition and Policy Project (CPP) implemented between 2004 and 2007. The three evaluated projects were launched in FY 2007 with termination dates—under their proposed five-year implementation periods toward the end of FY2012. In this report the term "Program" refers to the overarching EG Office program. The term "Project" refers to individual projects within the Program, in particular the DR-CAFTA IP, DSTA, and RED projects described above.

The economic growth objective for the DR is increased investment and more competitive production that will in turn generate added employment and income particularly among the rural low-income populations of the country. The context for responding to this challenge is a global free trade paradigm of bi- and multilateral trade agreements such as, formerly, the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and now the Central American Free Trade Agreement, including the DR (DR-CAFTA).<sup>6</sup> This paradigm presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, global free trade opens new export markets. On the other hand, global free trade brings competition from goods and services that can now be imported free of tariffs and non-tariff barriers. To respond effectively to this new global paradigm, and meet its rising employment and income targets, the Dominican Republic must endeavor to change the structure and style of its economic governance and production.

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<sup>2</sup> From the USAID/DR 2003-2007 five-year Strategic Plan

<sup>3</sup> Chemonics Contract No. EEM-I-00-07-00008, TO No. 1.

<sup>4</sup> AED Leader Award No. EPP-A-00-06-00002-00

<sup>5</sup> ABT Contract No. EDH-I00-05-00005-00

<sup>6</sup> Globally, the trade treaty is known as the DR-CAFTA, but in the Dominican Republic and in USAID/DR documentation the treaty is written as DR-CAFTA. This evaluation adopts the latter Dominican acronym for the treaty.

This Integrated Report presents the major cross-cutting findings from evaluations of each of the three discrete projects that were conducted from June to August, 2011.<sup>7</sup> It also a) includes an examination of how the three projects have and can mutually reinforce each other; b) recommends possible adjustments during the last year of the projects' implementation; and c) highlights overarching lessons learned and best practices to be applied to the projects and to other parts of the USAID/DR assistance portfolio.

## **CROSS-CUTTING FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The findings summarized in this Integrated Report are cross-cutting, applicable to the three projects, and have important implications for the Program. Other findings and conclusions are specific to each of the projects and can be found in their respective evaluation reports.

In terms of achieving improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican economy, the USAID EG Program has continued, at least partially, the trajectory of prior interventions—among these the Competitiveness and Policy Program (CPP) and DR-Advantage, a public relations and media campaign to support the competitiveness of Dominican exports and tourism.

The three projects in the current EG Program are contributing to strengthening vertical and horizontal links across the Dominican economy. The organizational development of clusters—under RED and DSTA as well as GODR trade treaty implementing institutions—under DR-CAFTA IP are the hallmarks of the EG Program. In spite of some of the critiques of the technical aspects of the individual projects, they have raised awareness of the opportunities and competition that participation in DR-CAFTA involves. However, the extent of this success has been constrained by shortcomings in project design features and implementation procedures. Looking forward, to sustain the momentum and sustainability of progress toward the EG Office Program Objective, the three projects will require some adjustments in their current implementation paths and procedures.

***Finding 1:*** *The DSTA and RED projects demonstrate that a cluster-based approach to improving conditions for a more competitive economy has been effective in the Dominican context.* The current Program and projects are not the first to apply a cluster-based approach to building a competitive economy in the DR. The term cluster, as used commonly and in project documents, is synonymous with public-private partnerships in a defined geographic area and with a particular product or service focus. The cluster strategy for developing tourism and agricultural development down to the grass roots and throughout government agencies related to development has become widespread beyond USAID-funded projects. The current Program has continued to re-enforce this strategy which has been implemented for more than ten years. This is an advance over simple production (value) chain strategies that do not explicitly include supporting national government and local 'civil society' institutions and enabling policies and regulations. The evaluation concludes, however, that for greater effectiveness this cluster approach requires closer coordination and deeper integration of activities among the public and private sectors. This has not always been the case for selected clusters, with the result that trade opportunities emerging from DR-CAFTA participation are not being seized and the potential for competition from other treaty country suppliers is increased.

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<sup>7</sup> USAID contracted AMEX International (AMEX) and DevTech Systems, Inc. (DevTech) to conduct an evaluation of three economic growth projects in the Dominican Republic (DR) and prepare this integrated report. AMEX/RAN-I-00-07-00008/AID-517-TO-11-00001.

**Finding 2:** *Although USAID envisioned strong coordination between and among all three projects, in practice this coordination has occurred more sporadically than systematically.* When the CPP closed and new contracts were awarded, USAID included references to coordination and collaboration across projects both in the requests for proposals and in the final awards. However, inter-project coordination has been spotty. The lack of coordination across projects in the Program has caused missed opportunities to identify new products and crops through research and development, to leverage producer and trade association capacity, and to enhance the collective impact of the three projects.

**Finding 3:** *Prolonged USAID and GODR approval procedures have delayed implementation at critical times with the result of disrupted project momentum.* Implementers' annual work plans were based on assumptions of prompt—not protracted—approval by USAID for 'Option Year' funding. Delays in USAID funding approval instead forced implementers to postpone contracting of facilities, engaging consultants or trainers, and recruiting to fill vacant technical staff positions to administer events in the new project implementation period. In the case of DSTA, protracted GODR procedures for the certification of small tourism cluster enterprises to operate concessions in or around protected areas delayed the issuing of operational grants as well as scheduled training and capacity building activities.

**Finding 4:** *The three projects are administering deficient monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.* The project implementers generally launched project M&E systems late, and their data storage and retrieval procedures make the sharing of performance indicator measures impossible except during quarterly and annual reporting periods; no central performance indicator database exists. Further, several activity-level indicators—e.g. number and hours of workshop events and number of event participants—have been used as “proxies” for measures of outcomes. These proxies, which include increased awareness, better management and technical skills and stronger institutions, are used without any steps taken to measure—through objective third-party event participant surveys—if indeed these changes have taken place and if so to what degree among various target beneficiary groups. As a result, progress toward achieving the EG Program objective is imperfectly documented.

**Finding 5:** *USAID branding that emphasizes USAID's role instead of that of local organizations has impeded the development of local identity which is crucial for capacity building and project effectiveness.* USAID FORWARD identifies local capacity building as a core principle. Each project evaluation found lost opportunities to raise the visibility and credibility of key local and GODR institutions to build capacity due to the strict requirements for branding. The application of the USAID branding guidelines—or the failure to seek more frequent adjustments to those guidelines—has crowded out the opportunity of the supported organizations to create their own identity (one of the Program goals). This has implications for sustainability of the foundations and institutions strengthened as part of the projects.

**Finding 6:** *While each Project is created to strengthen an organization and to ensure sustainability of project interventions after assistance terminates, this organizational development work is not yet completed.* Additional time is required for capacity building activities so that these organizations will be strong enough to function without USAID and/or other donor support. The following table summarizes the achievement that each project has attained in its corresponding organizational strengthening work.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Dominican Organization</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
<b>DR-CAFTA IP</b>	DICOEX	Awarded the independent ISO 9001 certification for the Directorate in late 2009.
<b>DSTA</b>	<i>Consejo Dominicano de Competitividad Turística</i> (CDCT)	Fully-registered, legal Dominican entity with staff
<b>RED</b>	Dominican Rural Economic Diversification Foundation (REDDOM)	Fully-registered, legal Dominican entity with staff.

The strengthening of an organization to assume the responsibility for Project activities is a sound development practice, as is creating foundations in order to institutionalize a Program objective. USAID has done this in many countries when the given institutional capacity was weak or non-existent. However, in some successful cases one necessary, but not sufficient, determinant of success was a USAID-provided endowment.<sup>8</sup> Except for DICOEX, which is a GODR Ministry of Commerce and Trade Directorate, there is little evidence that CDCT or REDDOM are yet close to being financially self-sufficient. Likewise, it does not appear to be realistic for USAID/DR to establish an endowment due to anticipated limited future program-funding levels and also because programs such as PL-480, the disposal of USAID property, or local currency surpluses do not exist in the DR. Therefore, in order to be sustainable in the longer run, CDCT and REDDCOM will require continued USAID support, most likely beyond the period of DSTA and RED implementation, until they have the capacity to solicit and attract funds from other sources.

### **CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Overall Program Recommendation:** *USAID/DR should continue to focus its economic growth program on organizational strengthening as well as agricultural and tourism development. However, now USAID should adopt a strengthening strategy of “learning by doing” in the context of new USAID GCC (Global Climate Change) and FtF (Feed the Future) initiatives.* In terms of achieving improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican Economy, the Program is at a critical moment in DR-CAFTA implementation. Many of the tariffs and prices that are protecting Dominican agriculture have only been marginally decreased to date. The substantial decreases are still to come. The evaluations of the three projects that make up the Program provide no evidence that the Dominican economy is prepared to be competitive when the tariffs are further reduced/removed.

The projects that are currently being implemented under the Program should continue, with some modifications to increase their effectiveness as outlined in this section. Furthermore, in the medium-term, USAID should continue its Economic Growth Program. The need for rural economic diversification—particularly in its agriculture and tourism sectors—is clear, and the need for policy reform to meet local development needs continues. This need will only increase when the tariff barriers are further reduced. Furthermore, USAID’s contributions can and do

<sup>8</sup> The lead author was the COP for the establishment of ACORDE in Costa Rica and part of a PACT program funded by USAID to do similar work in Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, and Bangladesh. The team leader of the RED evaluation was the COP in Sri Lanka where a similar effort was made and observed it in Ecuador.

continue to complement and mutually reinforce other donors programs (such as the World and Inter-American Development Bank).

**Recommendation 1:** *USAID should continue to strengthen its implementation of the cluster approach through better integration and coordination across clusters.* The cluster approach should remain a strategic tool for USAID/DR to foster in the future. USAID should require that the projects (DSTA and RED) undertake a cluster-by-cluster review to identify the bottlenecks to be addressed for achieving cluster income, employment and sustainability targets. If there is both an agricultural and tourism cluster in the same geographic area, then the effort should be to bring the stakeholders from the two clusters together in the same sessions to enhance awareness of each other's interests and to specifically search for synergies so that they know each other's problems and potentials. Importantly, cluster reviews should include GODR personnel to enhance the flow of information for cluster support needs from the public sector, such as more streamlined approval processes for operations.

**Recommendation 2:** *The three projects should develop and utilize opportunities to collaborate more effectively.* The projects should make efforts to improve coordination and collaboration at the levels of public policy and public awareness. In the past, the DR Advantage campaign provided high level coordination of efforts to strengthen the Dominican economy and sought to raise the public's awareness of these efforts. Utilizing *DR Advantage* as a reference point, USAID/DR should convoke the ministries, DICOEX, civil society, local cluster governance, the for-profit sector and business cooperative organizations to reflect on the accomplishments of the last five years in this area and determine priority areas for improving Dominican competitiveness in the coming years. The projects should take advantage of opportunities through trade groups and professional associations to collaborate across projects and communicate with other constituencies. The projects should continue to coordinate the Global Environmental Facility of the World Bank (GEF) and the IDB *Proyecto Agrícola de Transición a la Competitividad* (PACTA). The identification of common indicators to which two or more of the projects contribute is another mechanism for fostering coordination of activities at both the local and national levels.

**Recommendation 3:** *Build realistic timelines for USAID and GODR approvals into project design and annual implementation work plans.* At USAID/DR, staffing should be increased and existing staff equipped to better respond to implementing partners' requests for approvals at the technical levels. When projects have grant funds, the Mission should assess project capabilities to approve disbursements in comparison with the advance periods for funds. Avoidance of "option years" in future Mission contracting is also warranted to minimize disruption to implementation momentum. Resources might also be programmed to address areas where greater efficiencies in GODR approvals are required.

**Recommendation 4:** *Strengthen USAID/DR Technical Capabilities.* USAID/DR should reinforce its staff with agricultural production, marketing professionals, and M&E expertise. An experienced development sociologist would greatly enhance program capabilities by providing insight into the overall socio-economic challenge faced by the Mission.

**Recommendation 5:** *M&E on future projects should have greater USAID guidance and support.* As noted in the findings, the lack of strong monitoring and evaluation systems at the project level has diminished the ability to show change over time in outcomes. There are a variety of opportunities to improve this capacity in the future:

- Utilize USAID/DR's participation in the Chief Information Officer's (CIO) Mission Portfolio Management System (MPMS) pilot project for building Mission technical skills and for appropriate M&E systems in funded projects.<sup>9</sup>
- Require as a deliverable a system for data entry, analysis and reporting, concurrent with the project's Performance Management Plan (PMP), into which field staff, trainers, and project managers can enter data.
- Support implementing partners in connecting data to geographic information systems (GIS).
- Build into project design sufficient resources for contracting externally—e.g., LAPOP survey so that a specific set of questions could be used to measure both citizen knowledge of and the results of the Program.<sup>10</sup>

**Recommendation 6:** *USAID/DR should amend the projects' branding plans to support the development of local identities which are important for sustainability and local capacity building.* The USAID Branding rules and regulations provide examples of how to structure marking so that it does not take away from a development objective. An immediate action that can be taken when exercising the option years is to amend the branding implementation plan for each project. For example, if funding is provided for a tourist complex, the sign placed to announce the project should have some utility value other than saying it was funded by USAID. Commercial advertising and promotion strategies can be employed, and exceptions should be included in the revised branding implementation plans. In addition, as the projects enter their final year, books, pamphlets, and any printed matter should become products of the organization, and the USAID identity should be placed discretely so that the organization releasing the publication builds its own brand.

**Recommendation 7:** *USAID must reassess its strategy of establishing the foundations and identify specific and actionable plans for sustainability of the three primary project counterparts (DICOEX, CDCT, and REDDOM).* Specific strategies for developing each organization are included in the individual evaluation reports. Generally, there are actions that USAID can consider immediately in order to increase the probability of success in the future of the CDCT and REDDOM foundations and the Ministry of Commerce's DICOEX.

USAID/DR should recognize that the CDCT and REDDOM foundations will not be able to do the considerable work that needs to be done to develop their respective clusters and simultaneously become financially independent in the remaining 12 or so months of DSTA and RED implementation. Both foundations need at least two to three years of organizational development to have adequate capabilities for fundraising and generating other revenue streams, e.g., membership dues and service fees. While organizational development assistance should continue through the fifth year of the projects' implementation, USAID/DR should now put mechanisms in place for continuing support to CDCT, REDDOM and the clusters' movement during the next USAID/DR 2013-2017 strategic planning period and to prepare the DSTA and RED projects for that transition.

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<sup>9</sup> USAID - Agency-wide, IT Transition 184-15-01-01-2022-00. "This would provide for development of interfaces between business systems and/or new tools that utilize data from one or more independent systems."

<sup>10</sup> The next LAPOP survey is planned for the first calendar quarter of 2012. (correspondence with Mitch Seligson, founder and director of LAPOP, July 2011)

Fortunately, USAID/DR will have access to funding that can be used to engage CDCT and REDDOM beyond the life of the current DSTA and RED projects. For example, anticipated GCC Initiative funds for “sustainable landscape” activities in the DR offer one such opportunity for USAID/DR to engage the CDCT as an implementing partner—and thus continue to build its organizational capacity—in support of nature tourism clusters around or in protected areas of vulnerable habitat where biodiversity is threatened. This effort should be carefully coordinated with the USAID-funded TNC-implemented Environmental Protection Program.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the DR, with its clusters approach to sustainable (nature-based) tourism, can offer unique experiences to the GCC “sustainable landscapes” strategy. Similarly, USAID/DR can channel part or all of its Feed the Future (FtF) Initiative funding through REDDOM as an implementing partner to support development of producer clusters in low-income rural areas to improve their food security. In both cases, GCC and FtF funding can be used to launch the CDCT and REDDOM foundations on a self-sustaining trajectory by engaging them as implementing partners who will be “learning by doing.”

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<sup>11</sup> Environmental Protection Program Cooperative Agreement No. 517-A-00-09-00106-00.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The USAID/DR Tri-Project Evaluation is similar to other Agency multi-project evaluations that assess the performance of ongoing projects, review them as a program—in this case the Mission’s Economic Growth Office Program—and to make recommendations for future Mission Strategic Planning to advance EG Program goals. This genre of evaluation makes reference to a constellation of three projects<sup>12</sup> forming the EG Program’s Strategic Objective (SO-1): “Increased sustainable economic opportunities for the poor by achieving improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican economy.”

The three specific Project evaluations are presented in separate reports:

- DR-CAFTA IP, implemented by Chemonics International, has as its goal strengthening GODR institutional capacity—particularly that of the Directorate of Foreign Trade and Trade Agreements Administration (DICOEX) in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce—to implement compliance under the trade treaty and to raise private sector awareness of its scope for changing the way of doing business under an open trade regime.
- DSTA, implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), has as its goal promoting sustainable tourism by support for the diversification of tourism offerings by clusters of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and community based organizations (CBOs) in and around rural protected areas using the cluster strategy with support from a new project-sponsored foundation, the *Consejo Dominicano de Competitividad Turística* (CDCT).
- RED, implemented by Abt Associates, focuses on rural economic diversification using cluster strategy for area development. It too has an organizational development goal of a foundation, which is called the Dominican Rural Economic Diversification Foundation (REDDOM).

Three projects made up the preceding EG Program:

- Competitiveness Strategies for the Dominican Republic (1998-2000), which supported ongoing private sector initiatives in the DR.
- Policies to Improve Competitiveness in the DR (June 2001-May 2003) was instrumental in the creation of the National Competitiveness Council (CNC for its Spanish name *Consejo Nacional de Competitividad*).
- Competitiveness and Policy Project (CPP), which developed clusters in tourism and agriculture, and continued with the policy work begun under the task orders.

Concurrently, the Environmental Protection Project (EPP) being implemented by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is included in the evaluation report because it is a major EG Office Program component even though it was split off from the DSTA project. It works on issues of relevance both at the community and policy level for the program. The EPP was not evaluated, per se, but its scope of work, PMP, reports, and reported activities were studied as part of the integration or inter-project coordination theme.

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<sup>12</sup> Even though one or more of the implementing partners had a contract that was called a “Program”, in the text we refer to them as “Projects.”

## **A. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE ADDRESSED BY THE PROGRAM AND THE PROJECTS EVALUATED**

The Economic Growth Program has been focused on assisting the public and private sectors of the DR to increase competitiveness by first taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) to export, and then to meet the increased competition with other nations as the DR-CAFTA is being implemented. USAID/DR concluded that assisting the DR in meeting these challenges required technical assistance in policy and regulation reform, strategies to diversify both tourism and agriculture, and technical assistance in value chain development to meet the quality demands of the U.S. and European markets.

The organizational strategy used to implement the Program to meet the challenges became an organizational development challenge as well. The strategy was chosen to foster cluster development in tourism and agriculture as well as organizational development of a new government directorate. Managerially, the challenge for USAID/DR was to integrate the multi-project program so that synergies would be generated vertically between policy and production, and horizontally between sectors and value chains forming the clusters.

In brief, the Economic Growth Program faced multiple levels of development challenges, and they will be addressed. The working hypotheses used by each of the three projects are described in their respective reports. The working hypothesis of the Mission's EG program can be stated as such, *"If the program is well integrated, then the development of private enterprise and community based clusters and the strengthening of GODR entities charged with trade agreement compliance will be accomplished, the technical assistance to tourism and agriculture will be delivered, and the Dominican Republic will fully benefit from a free market paradigm as implemented in the context of the CBI and DR-CAFTA."*

## **B. PROGRAM BACKGROUND: INTEGRATION THEME**

### **1. FOUR INTEGRATING FRAMEWORKS**

There are four integrating frameworks that structure this Project. These are outlined below:

1. The first integrating framework for the three projects evaluated—DR-CAFTA IP, RED, and DSTA—maintains the common goal of increasing Dominican competitiveness, particularly with economic opportunities for the poor and low-income regions of the country, under a new, open trade regime introduced by participation in the DR-CAFTA.

2. The second integrating framework is the Portman-Bingaman arrangement that addresses the concern—voiced by New Mexico Senator, Jeff Bingaman—that the impact of the DR-CAFTA agreement would negatively impact what were termed sensitive crops and agricultural products and hence affect the wellbeing of the population.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, the United States Government (USG) decided to provide an earmark for USAID/DR with \$10 million per year for five years (2007 to 2012) to support projects that would generate alternative rural employment. The three projects evaluated and presented in separate reports benefitted in part from that special funding.<sup>14</sup>

3. A third integrating theme is that of fomenting and stimulating a national movement for the implementation of DR-CAFTA that brings together the public and private sectors. Although not

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<sup>13</sup> USAID/LAC. June 24, 2008. Indicators for Tracking the Impact of the Portman-Bingaman "Earmark" for the Dominican Republic.

<sup>14</sup> Letter between Rob Portman (Executive Office of the President) and Senator Jeff Bingaman, 20 JUN 2005.

specifically stated as such in the documentation from the projects, the effort to bring together the sectors for discussion of priorities and the use of clusters rather than a narrower production chain strategy for organization leads one toward the concept of a broad movement. We take the title of a CPP report to name this the DR Advantage, or broad cluster strategy.

4. The fourth point of reference is the USAID draft PIP.<sup>15</sup> It refers to the need to align USG and the Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) efforts and goals. The acceptance of DR-CAFTA is a transformational move on the part of the GODR because its implementation means a change in various aspects such as the way that governance is conducted and funded,<sup>16</sup> the interaction between the public and private sectors, and the terms of trade with the rest of the world. Alignment of USG and GODR goals, and corresponding efforts to achieve those goals, has been over ten years in the making.

## **2. UNDERSTANDING OF STRUCTURE AND STYLE OF MANAGEMENT**

Governance in the Dominican Republic is hierarchical, centralized, and top-down in structure, with authority and responsibility seldom delegated. One of the transitional challenges under DR-CAFTA, if the DR wishes to be competitive, is the need to delegate authority and create agile, decentralized, quick decision-making to support economic endeavors. The one-stop window for incorporation was an example of this transition. The transition for increased competitiveness requires both a social movement aspect (in which all sectors buy into the goal of a national agenda such as the DR Advantage), and also a reconfiguration into an organic structure and style of management for society and the economy that facilitates interaction across levels of business and governance instead of centralized, hierarchical decision-making.

Another issue is stove-piping. In the USAID context, stove-piping is the consequence of a mechanical approach as well as within-project fixation on checking off process indicators instead of having results indicators that reflect inter-project synergies. These challenges to both the Dominican system and also the USAID system of management are discussed in terms of integration, and there are recommendations for facilitating integration throughout this special report.

## **3. THE INTEGRATION QUESTION THROUGH THE DECADE OF THE USAID/DR PROGRAM**

As noted briefly above, the USAID/DR program covered in the TRI-Project Evaluation has substantial background dating to the CBI in the 1990s. Two task orders under USAID's Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment mechanism lead to the Competitiveness and Policy Program (CPP), and from the CPP's three major components came the three programs evaluated.

Because of the decade-long effort, a comprehensive description of the evolution of the USAID program is necessary to understand the complexity of an integrated approach to management and also the potential for synergies between the projects.

The first Task Order (TO), Competitiveness Strategies for the Dominican Republic (1998-2000), supported ongoing private sector initiatives in the DR. The second TO, Policies to Improve Competitiveness in the DR (June 2001-May 2003), was instrumental in the creation of the

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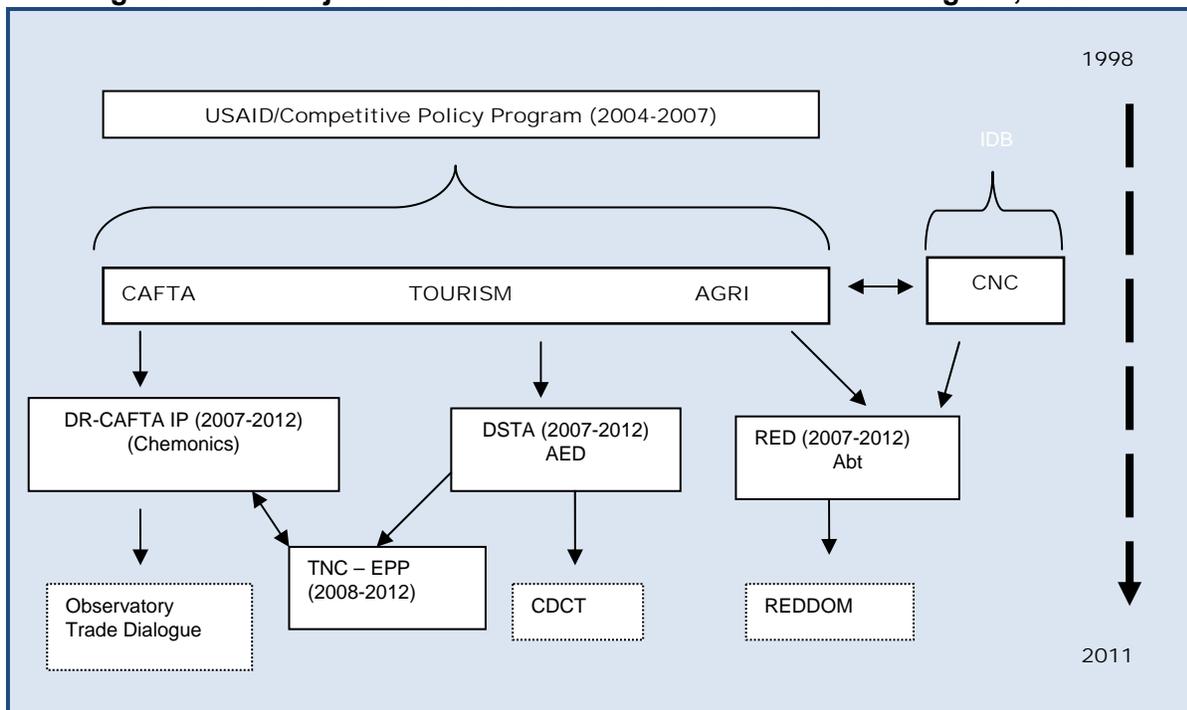
<sup>15</sup> USAID preliminary draft July 2011. Parameters Identification Paper (PIP): USAID/Dominican Republic Country Development Cooperation Strategy

<sup>16</sup> When the tariffs are reduced, aside from the loss of protection for the private sector, the public sector loses substantial funding. That loss of funding reduces the budgetary strength for health and education. Health and education have been and are substantial USAID commitments and continue to be so in the present draft PIP. From this perspective, in the short run, the USAID effort behind DR-CAFTA IP runs contrary to the USAID efforts for increased GODR effort in health and education.

National Competitiveness Council (CNC for its Spanish name *Consejo Nacional de Competitividad*). Work on these TOs formed some of the nation's first cluster-based assessments of the sector needs and strategies that could be used to increase their competitiveness in preparation for the implementation of DR-CAFTA IP. Importantly, the analysis and the mobilization of the interested parties in the public and private sectors provided a framework for USAID/DR to use in the design of the CPP which developed clusters<sup>17</sup> in tourism and agriculture and continued with the policy work. The findings in the final report<sup>18</sup> on the CPP laid out the framework and objectives for the three projects evaluated: DR-CAFTA IP, DSTA, and RED.

Figure 1 shows the chronology of these USAID efforts, including the foundations being developed at the time of this TRI-Project Evaluation. It also shows the changing structure and protracted nature of coordination for USAID/DR. The foundations will be discussed later.

**Figure 1: The Projects of the USAID/DR Economic Growth Program, 1998-2011**



#### 4. TIME HORIZON: TARIFFS AND SENSITIVE CROPS/PRODUCTS

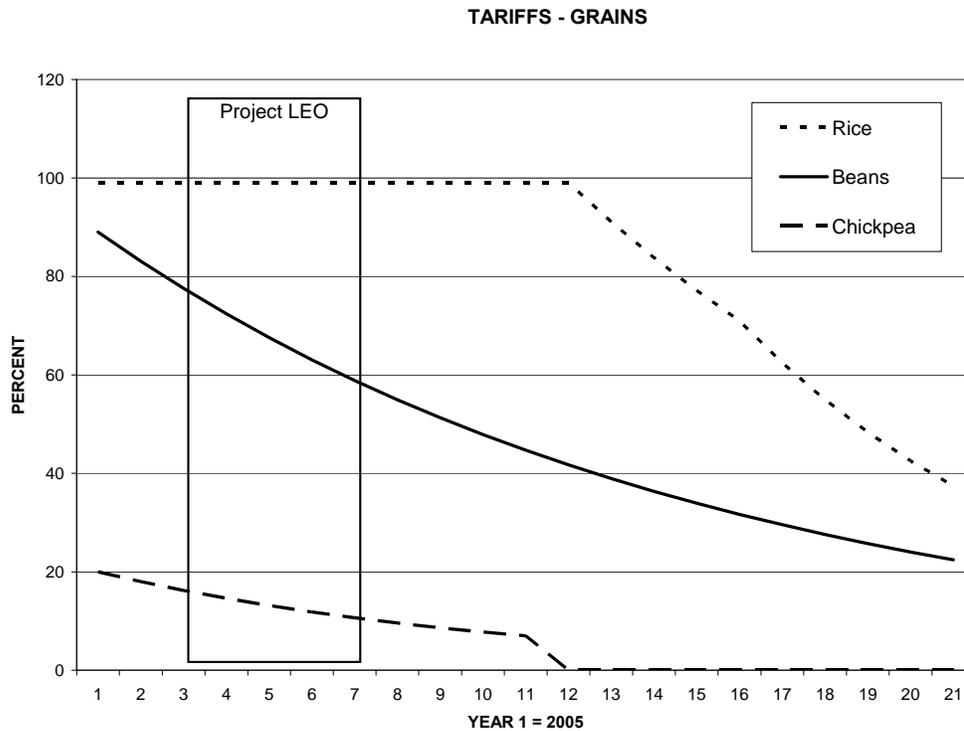
Because the DR-CAFTA and resulting USAID funding for the three projects was the basis for the program evaluated, evaluators expect that the original Bingaman concerns and the transition toward maximizing the opportunities and mitigating the challenges of the free trade agreement will take another decade to achieve its intended outcomes (e.g., improved livelihoods and employment opportunities in the rural areas as well as the diversification of agriculture and tourism for increased export earnings).

<sup>17</sup> The CPP helped create six clusters in tourism (Romana-Bayahibe, Puerto Plata, Barahona, La Vega/Constanza, Samaná, and La Altagracia) and three in agriculture (La Vega horticulture, Jarabacoa coffee, and mangos in Baní and nationally). p. 2 Final CPP Report.

<sup>18</sup> Chemonics. Promoting Competitiveness and Equity Dominican Republic Competitiveness and Policy Program: Final Report, USAID Contract No. 517-C-00-03-00110-00 December 2007.

The following three graphs<sup>19</sup> show the timeline from 2005 to 2025 to include the signing of DR-CAFTA in 2007, the program LOE from 2007 to present, and 2025—when it is expected that the last protective tariffs on the sensitive crops/products will end.<sup>20</sup>

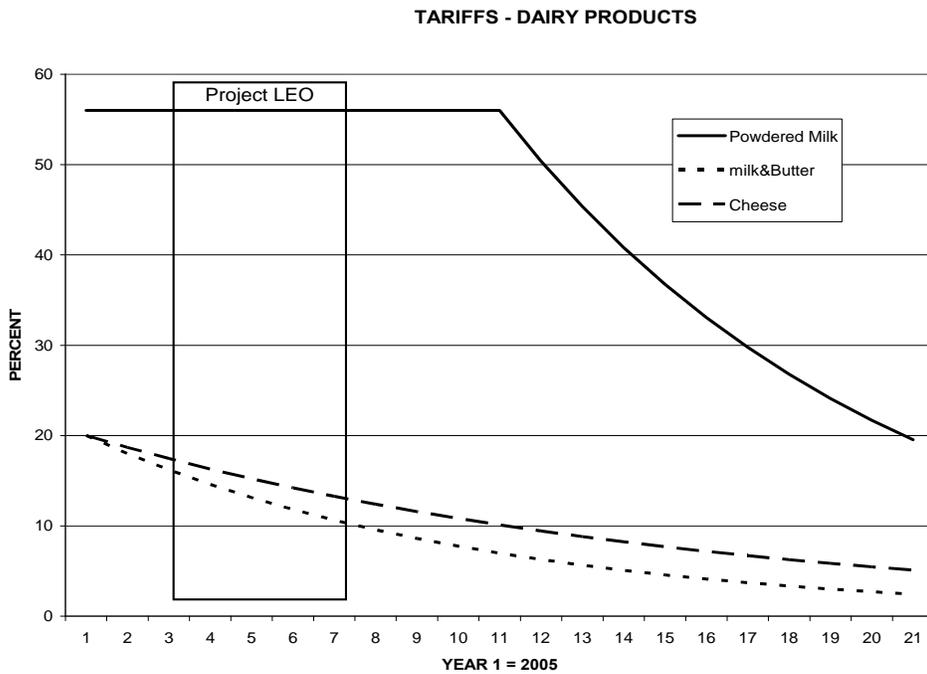
**Figure 2: Tariffs on Grains - 2005 through 2025**



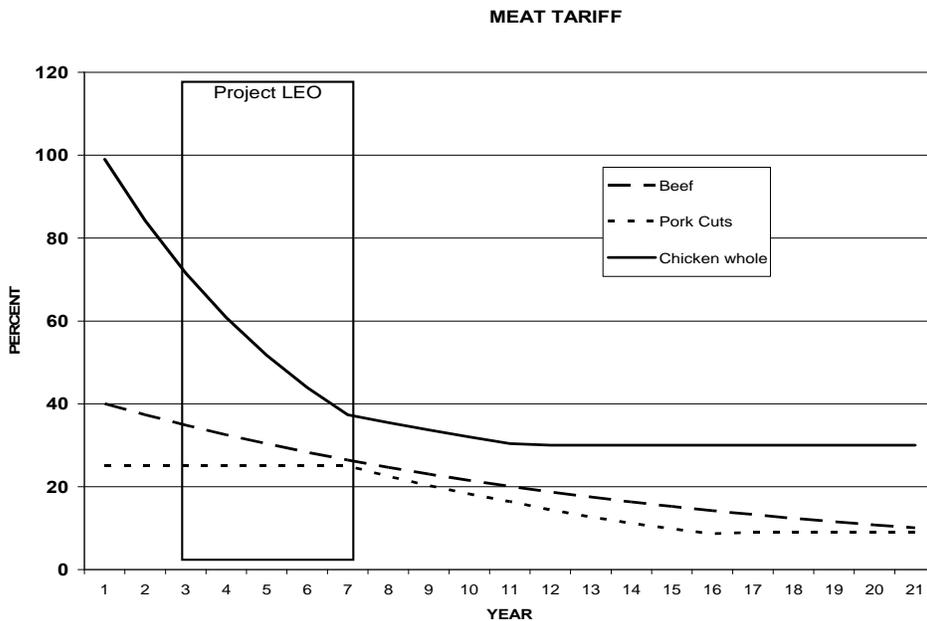
<sup>19</sup> The data was taken from Rubén D. Núñez, Ph.D. and Danilo Cruz De Paula. Feb 2007. DR-CAFTA: The Day After, A Layman's Guide of What the Trade Agreement Means for the Dominican Republic. Chemonics International Inc. under Contract No. 517-C-00-03-00110-00. Graphs by the author - Merschrod

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that a number of factors limit the timeliness of the information on these graphs – as there may have been more definitive studies since the work of Núñez et al (2007), negotiations may have taken place, and tariff rate quotas that set limits to imports.

**Figure 3: Tariffs on Dairy Products - 2005 through 2025**



**Figure 4: Tariffs on Meats - 2005 through 2025**



The transition from the first competitiveness task order to the present three projects<sup>21</sup> meant going from a single and relatively simple managerial task with one implementing partner and a

<sup>21</sup> There are actually four projects when the TNC EPP is included.

project officer to multiple implementing partners that required multiple-CTO oversight. At each stage the work to facilitate interaction and synergies between projects increased as did the technical expertise to assure relevant content. The envisioned transitions that will arrange for the non-profit organizations (CDCT and REDDOM) to carry on the projects will make the integration task even more difficult.

As shown in figures 2–4 above, tariff protection has declined in varying amounts for some crops/products, and in others the pressure has not begun. Nevertheless, the pressure will continue, and the rationale for the Program is as relevant in 2011 as it was during the decade of USAID/DR programs, if not more so. The needed effort toward diversification of crops of export-worthy quality has only begun. In the tourist area, the effort toward diversification and expansion of the tourist options from the major coastal and all-inclusive centers has also just begun.

In summary, although DR-CAFTA has been signed, its full implementation still has a long time to play out.<sup>22</sup> Follow-through is recommended in all three TRI-Project Evaluations, and in each project evaluation there are detailed recommendations for both short- and long-term efforts.

### **C. GEOGRAPHY OF THE PROJECTS AND THE EVALUATIONS**

One of the important themes of the Program was the focus on populations and areas dependent on sensitive crops and agricultural products for their livelihoods. The RED project had produced a map of rice areas. The evaluation team had a GIS consultant add corn, bean and dairy areas added to that map, then insert layers for each program (DICOEX, RED, USAID/DSTA), as well as symbols showing where the TRI-Project Evaluation team had made field visits. Figure 5 presents this information.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The USAID Program began with a task order in 1998, followed by a second task order in 2001, then by a project (Chemonics CPP) from 2003 to 2007 and then by the three projects being evaluated and also the TNC-EPP (2008).

<sup>23</sup> The base map and all layers, including power point versions, were left with RED and USAID/DR. Printed maps similar to Map 1 were left with the Mission and also RED for future use.

Figure 5: Tri-Project Locations Overlay on Sensitive Crops/Products



## **D. PURPOSE OF THE INTEGRATED REPORT**

The intended audience for the Evaluation is largely USAID/DR. This Integrated Report examines how the three projects noted above have and can mutually reinforce each other; proposes foundations for new interventions to address new GCC and FtF Presidential Initiatives while achieving the overall objective of competitive and (environmentally) sustainable economic opportunities and livelihoods for poverty eradication in the DR in the context of DR-CAFTA; and highlights overarching lessons learned and best practices that can be mutually shared among the three project implementers and counterparts as well as implementers and counterparts in other parts of the USAID/DR assistance portfolio.

The scope of work in the RFTOP stated ten questions<sup>24</sup> to be addressed by the TRI-Project Evaluation team. The last three questions, based on the work of the three evaluation teams and the Team Leader's assessment and evaluation, are the focus of this special or overall report:

1. Overall, what have been the strengths (and the weaknesses) of the programs comprising these three projects?
2. Based on the experience of the three projects evaluated, in which areas is USAID assistance most urgently needed?
3. What opportunities are there for increased coordination of activities, initiatives, and collaboration across these three projects? Are there common activities across the three projects that would enhance the Economic Growth Program portfolio?

Because the integration aspects inherent in the apparent hypothesis are a key concern, we will begin with a Program background analysis to answer all three questions. In addition, the purpose is to provide short-term advice for the fifth-year extensions and recommendations for preparing the new strategic plan.

## **II. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

This is a Performance Evaluation as per the 2011 USAID evaluation guidelines and includes a substantial Theory of Change component. Through the evaluation, the evaluators reflect upon the Program's original assumptions, strategies, working hypotheses, apparent working hypothesis, and implied theory. Substantive findings and recommendations are made to provide USAID/DR with options for the new Strategic Objective and the continuation of the Economic Growth Program.

Each of the three projects was evaluated by a team consisting of an experienced leader in the field and a related specialist. The following methodologies were used to evaluate each project:

- DR-CAFTA IP: Project and GODR documents were reviewed; interviews were conducted with key personnel in DICOEX and related GODR entities as well as the private sector; event participants' evaluations were analyzed.
- RED & DSTA: Clusters were sampled for geographic coverage and thematic coverage (e.g., types of tourism and agricultural clusters). In each cluster, key informants within and related to the clusters were interviewed, documentation was reviewed, and site visits were made to assess the project impacts in communities and associations. In all

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<sup>24</sup> Questions # 8, 9, and 10, p.7 of Attachment I "Statement of Work". RFTOP-SOL-517-11-000002.

three evaluations, USAID and implementing partner personnel were interviewed multiple times.

Information for this Integrated Report was collected in the following ways:

- Preliminary and follow-up interviews with the implementing partners and their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) personnel;
- A review of background documentation on all three projects in the Mission program, a current related project, previous projects, and task orders;<sup>25</sup>
- Periodic debriefings with evaluation team members on their findings. Their presentations to the Mission, findings, and recommendations were reviewed and discussed;
- Site visits to talk with implementers and participants;
- Interviews with Contracting Officers Technical Representatives (COTRs)
- Sharing drafts of this report with the team leaders for their critique and feedback.

The design of this evaluation was the first deliverable to the Mission. After a review of the background documents and dialogue with mission personnel and project implementers, the design was presented and discussed with the Mission. The sampling and evaluation approach was then discussed with the implementers and sampling adjusted accordingly.

### III. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Figure 1 presented the organizational evolution of the program. It is a graphic representation of the steady course that the Mission held for over twelve years in its goal of increased opportunities, generation of employment, and support for the implementation of DR-CAFTA. It is a representation of both the evolving complexity faced by management in search of maximizing potential synergies between the projects as well as the scaling up of the program.

In this chapter we will first present the overall accomplishment of the Program to highlight that it is a substantial, positive result of the decade-long Economic Growth Program of USAID/DR. Furthermore, although the findings are critical of the implementation of the program, they and the recommendations are made with the intent of being constructive and in support of the program. The second part provides the critical analysis behind the major findings.

Both parts answer question 11 from the Tri-Project Evaluation Scope of Work: *“What opportunities are there for increased coordination of activities, initiatives, and collaboration across these three projects? Are there common activities across the three projects that would enhance the Economic Growth Program portfolio?”*

This report examines the coordination between the three projects, the integration on the broad array of public sector and private sector institutions, and USAID efforts related to those linkages and the USAID goal of assuring alignment with the GODR’s National Development Strategy (NDS).<sup>26</sup> Part of the analysis involves social organizational theory, most of which was espoused in project documents but not made explicit in them. These sections will make that explicit in

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<sup>25</sup> The original RFPs, the technical proposals, PMPs, quarterly and annual reports, grants manual, special reports and a RIF report. The complete list is in the reference annex.

<sup>26</sup> National Development Strategy (NDS), 2010 Twenty year goals

order to provide the Mission with a framework that should be useful for the next Strategic Plan and also to provide a vision for integrated management of the program.

## **A. OVERALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **1. SCALING UP IN PERSPECTIVE**

From the initial task orders to the projected end of the three projects' implementation periods in 2012, USAID has committed approximately \$58.6 million. Related funding by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is slightly less than three times that amount.<sup>27</sup> One perspective is that the Program started off as a small and focused pilot project. Based on those pilot tests of the cluster concept, the EG Program was scaled up to become a national effort to support the changes that would help implement DR-CAFTA and the broad cluster movement.

“The Santiago regional and cluster projects are intended to serve as pilot projects that could be used to promote regional and cluster development in the DR.” Antonio Rodriguez Mansfield. 2000, p.1

Another perspective is that, against the small and focused beginning, the context is DR-CAFTA. It is a framework that will restructure the economy and change the culture of business and governance. Although not stated in so many words in the documentation, restructuring should be seen in terms of new and changed multipliers in an input-output table of the economy. It should be expected that the econometric model of the Dominican Republic, if there were one, will have substantially different coefficients in the medium to long term. That is the goal—which represents a major task.

The USAID/DR Economic Growth Program has been, in part, a demonstration effort, and also a practical change effort of processes toward the final goal of restructuring. Evidence in the scaling up is found in the expansion from the pilot clusters in 2000 to the few in the CPP, to nine tourism clusters in DSTA, and the 11 agricultural clusters in RED. In the policy area, the Mission continued with the CBI perspective of access to U.S. markets to support negotiating the chapters of the DR-CAFTA to organizational strengthening of agencies charged with implementing that regional trade agreement.

The recommendations by the evaluators support continued scaling up through greater area coverage, organizational development, and specific technical assistance so that the public and private sectors are able to interact, implement, and thus take advantage of DR-CAFTA.

### **2. ACHIEVEMENTS COMPARED WITH TARGETS**

Each of the project evaluations assessed the achievements compared to the targets set in the PMPs to the extent possible with the data available from the projects. In general, the conclusions were that the project implementers did achieve those targets. The overarching or cross-cutting comment on monitoring and evaluation is that the indicators were mostly input and output indicators, and not results indicators in line with the working hypotheses of the projects and the organizational development of clusters or agencies. The individual evaluators reconstructed scales of organizational development or detailed assessments of each cluster in order to describe those achievements.

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<sup>27</sup> The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is financing several programs to improve the business environment, foster diversification and enhance competitiveness in the Caribbean. Since 2006, the IDB has approved US\$180 million in policy-based loans in the Dominican Republic, which support measures to improve the country's macroeconomic and fiscal stability, improve the business climate, promote the development of productive sectors and foster greater innovation and investment in research and development. (BIBA, Improving the business climate in the Caribbean, Wed. Mar 30, 2011).

The development of the agencies in the case of DICOEX and the clusters in the case of DSTA and RED is best described as a work in progress and a substantial advancement, and has built a foundation worthy of continuation.

The remainder of this chapter refers to the first finding that integration and mutual reinforcement has been negligible. The conclusion is that there has been vertical discontinuity, stove-piping, and disintegration when compared to the previous stage of the USAID/DR program. There are five sections of analysis to support the finding.

## **B. CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

### **1. LOST VISION**

The Evaluation found that the vision of the social and economic organization of the future was the broad integrated cluster concept symbolized by the DR-Advantage. However, along the way, as the Program was implemented through individual project contracts, this vision was lost. In spite of the contractual obligations, the projects were not integrated and, with notable exceptions, project personnel did not coordinate activities so that geographical overlap would provide synergies to bring about greater local multipliers.

For example, in the case of RED, coordination with relevant organizations previously supported by USAID/DR were not involved, e.g. *Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana* (JAD) and *Centro para el Desarrollo Agropecuario y Forestal* (CEDAF). RED had policy-related problems, with an example being the formation of rural organizations. DSTA had policy-related issues with the Environment Ministry (e.g., the formation of associations and protected area concessions), but they were not dealt with until TNC split off from DSTA to create the TNC-EPP. The evaluation of DR-CAFTA IP found that DICOEX and the DR-CAFTA IP did not take advantage of the network of producer and trade associations' capacity to reach a large and interested population.

The significance of this capacity lies in the associations' specific means of communication—meetings, trade newsletters, and workshops. It is also in their solidarity and ability to discuss issues and then to mobilize around their interests. In order for the Program to support the broad cluster vision, the projects need to establish the linkages between these associations horizontally and with the government agencies vertically.

### **2. DISINTEGRATION**

Disintegration most clearly manifested in the AED-administered DSTA project, where the Mission, in its effort to cope with the dysfunctional DSTA management, encountered the following issues:

- TNC (a consortium member of DSTA) split off with a five-year, \$12million cooperative agreement (TNC-EPP)<sup>28</sup> that effectively ended TNC's input and coordination with DSTA on the crucial task of community based tourism and protected areas. The tourism development plans<sup>29</sup> and environmental concerns were left to DSTA to implement instead of following through with each community.
- Another consortium member, SOLIMA, was frustrated with the dysfunctional consortium and USAID/DR agreed with their departure. Unfortunately, SOLIMAR's role was supposed to be marketing, and a replacement for that role was never found.

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<sup>28</sup> Cooperative Agreement No. 517-A-00-09-00106-00 Environmental Protection Program (TNC-EPP)

<sup>29</sup> TNC. Nov/Dic. 2009 Reporte de Seguimiento Ambiental a los Proyectos Destinos. Programa USAID-DSTA, Componente Conservación y Ambiente. And Interview with Eddy Silva of TNC July 2011.

- The Mission, as a strategy for “Dominicanizing” the Program for the future, also supported the formation of a new foundation, CDCT, which would become one of the products of the DSTA cooperative agreement (similar to REDDOM in the case of RED). That effort split the DSTA team into antagonistic groups, and although the establishment of the CDCT became part of the DSTA workplan, it was not met with enthusiasm on the part of AED.

Disintegration reinforced the stove-piping within the projects as each consortium pursued its own interests and focused on achieving its particular contracted benchmarks.

### 3. VERTICAL DISCONTINUITY

DR-CAFTA IP was truncated by a USAID administrative misunderstanding by RED and DSTA. That is, it was clearly stated that RED and DSTA should not be involved in policy as some project leaders did not believe that it was part of the SOW.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, the needs of the participants in the two latter projects could have been used by the projects through DR-CAFTA IP to inform policy and regulation changes. Yet, neither project linked the policy aspects in spite of the fact that coordination was in their SOW, as will be shown below. The DR-CAFTA IP evaluators found that when it came to the implementation of the chapters of DR-CAFTA, the public-private dialogue seemed to be one-way—DICOEX and other agencies were telling the private sector the way things should be and not getting feedback on what the private sector needed in order to function effectively under a new set of domestic rules generated by DR-CAFTA IP compliance. A solution to this one-way street is offered in the recommendations section.

### 4. COORDINATION: A KNOWN MISSION CHALLENGE

The final CPP report indicates that the Mission had asked for suggestions for the post-2007 Strategic Objective. That report suggested the division of what was previously three CPP components into three projects. When the Mission accepted this approach, they created the need for integration mechanisms because, whereas before there had been one contractor managing the three areas under CPP, now the Mission had to coordinate and facilitate the integration of three contractors. The need to coordinate was not lost on the Mission as shown by the following examples.

1. In the RFTOP for the project that became RED, the Mission had integration expectations:

The project is expected to work in tandem with the ongoing and planned USAID development activities to the maximum extent possible, particularly the DR-CAFTA IP and the DSTA Project as well as all other rural economic diversification projects financed by the GODR and other donors, especially the SEA-IDB-funded *Proyecto Agrícola de Transición a la Competitividad (PATCA)*<sup>31</sup> Project and the CNC-IDB Competitiveness Project.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Interviews with RED CEO and DSTA personnel, July 2011.

<sup>31</sup> This project will be funded through the Foreign Assistance Objective Economic Growth under the Program Area of Agriculture. The subsequent Program Element that will be addressed is Agricultural Productivity. The Foreign Assistance Framework can be found online at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/79748.pdf>. More information regarding the Foreign Assistance Reform, Framework and Objective, Program Areas, Program Elements and Sub Element definitions can be found at: <http://www.state.gov/f/reform/>

<sup>32</sup> USAID Request for Task Order Proposal Number: 517-07-007 SEP 2007, p.2, 3)

2. The SOW for DR-CAFTA mentioned an Inter-Institutional Project Steering Committee<sup>33</sup> to give key public and private sector partners a true voice in guiding the project, and expressed that “close coordination with stakeholders, donors, and other USAID programs will be a hallmark of this project.”<sup>34</sup>

3. RED:

“USAID may identify potential coordination activities as part of its responsibilities in this area; however, the Contractor shall explore opportunities to coordinate with other donor projects and suggest to USAID potential areas for collaboration.”<sup>35</sup>

“This Task Order comprises a range of activities, counterparts and participants and therefore requires significant coordination and organization to ensure coherence and consistency.”<sup>36</sup>

4. DSTA Award:

Recognizing the inherent interrelatedness of and anticipated synergy with the forthcoming Rural Economic Growth Program (REDP), the GSTA/DR Team (Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance) will actively seek to coordinate all program activities and initiatives. As such, the GSTA will propose convening quarterly meetings (at a minimum or perhaps more frequently at the outset) with representatives of the REDP staff and USAID/DR personnel to ensure effective coordination, reduce redundancy of efforts, and maximize development impact. The GSTA staff will also routinely coordinate efforts with the staff of the Investment Fund for Environmental Protection (FIPA) until the end of FY 2008.<sup>37</sup>

Mirroring the coordination efforts with the REDP mentioned above, the GSTA/DR Team will establish a similar working relationship with the future contractor for the DR-CAFTA Environmental Policy initiative, given the considerable impact that continued development and likely expansion of nature-based tourism will have on the Dominican environment.<sup>38</sup>

This last quotation brings us back to the Vertical Discontinuity section above, i.e., the truncated implementation-policy linkage.

Interviews with key personnel in USAID/DR and affiliated with the projects confirmed that, aside from a few early meetings and some intensive attempts to facilitate coordination between the members of the DSTA partners as it was disintegrating, neither the implementing partners nor the USAID CTOs facilitated coordination.

## 5. MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

As is pointed out in the separate RED evaluation, the go-it-alone approach led to a lack of research and development to identify new products that could be competitively grown by

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<sup>33</sup> SOW for DR-CAFTA IP, Sec. C.4. Task 1

<sup>34</sup> TASK Order EEM-I-00-07-000. Section C. Objectives

<sup>35</sup> USAID Request for Task Order Proposal (RFTOP) Number: 517-07-007 Under the Plus Indefinite Quantity Contract, 2007 RAISE. p.14

<sup>36</sup> USAID Request for Task Order Proposal (RFTOP) Number: 517-07-007 Under the RAISE Plus Indefinite Quantity Contract, 2007. p. 3 of Attachment II.

<sup>37</sup> GSTA Award No. 517-A-00-07-00105-00, Sep. 2007. sec. 7 of part I under F. Cross-cutting Issues and Key Considerations.

<sup>38</sup> GSTA Award No. 517-A-00-07-00105-00, Sep. 2007 sec. 8 of part I under F. Cross-cutting Issues and Key Considerations,

farmers in sensitive crop areas, e.g., bitter orange or Hass avocados in the Lomas de Cabrera-Dajabon region, and shitake mushrooms in the pine/oak forested areas in the center of the island.

The DR-CAFTA IP evaluation also noted analogous missed opportunities, and described them as leveraging producer and trade association capacity:

Trade association representatives interviewed indicated their dismay that DICOEX—and the project, by implication—did not recognize the information sources—meetings, trade newsletters, workshops etc.—that could be venues for the inclusion of a “unit”—a two-hour, half-day, or full-day—that addresses DR-CAFTA IP concerns of particular interest to their membership. Trade and producer association representatives claimed willingness to make their communications organs and meeting venues available for sharing relevant DR-CAFTA IP information.

All of the findings stated above point toward a major cross-cutting theme—horizontal and vertical linkages. The next section examines this theme in greater detail.

#### **IV. OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION: A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING THE BROAD CLUSTER**

Integration has been the main challenge for implementing the apparent development hypothesis of the program. Going forward, additional actions are necessary to overcome this challenge.

Using the DR-Advantage (2007) as a reference document, the Program should convoke the original parties and new actors to a review of the last five years. Methodology for such a convention or workshop should use the neutral table, that is, an objective third party to convoke the members of the broad cluster for a facilitated discussion of accomplishments and priorities for accomplishing the goals. It is suggested that ministries, DICOEX, civil society, local cluster governance, the for-profit sector from the RED and DSTA clusters, and the business and cooperative associations be represented by thought leaders and actively interested personnel. Techniques such as Appreciative Inquiry should be used to highlight accomplishments of the last five years and the priority areas for increasing DR capacity and competitiveness.

In the meanwhile, cluster-by-cluster internal review and strategic planning should be conducted using, again, the neutral table format and Appreciative Inquiry as a style of conducting the review of accomplishments, and to identify the bottlenecks that need to be broken to achieve the goals of the cluster. The facilitators of the neutral table should keep in mind that the objective, aside from identifying the specific accomplishments and needs of the cluster, is to develop the linkages among cluster members and the organizational development of the cluster as an area organization. If the given cluster has periodic meetings, then this process should be built onto these meetings to reinforce the importance of the cluster. If both an agricultural cluster and a tourism cluster are operating in the same geographic area, then the effort should be to bring the two clusters together in the same sessions to increase awareness of each other's interests and to search for specific synergies so that they know each other's problems and potentials. People from the Ministry should be incorporated to enhance the vertical integration and flow of information.

Program-wise, all four projects should be facilitating and participating in each of these processes; participation should be a project responsibility because the interaction will both inform planning and, importantly, build linkages between project personnel and also between

project personnel and cluster leaders. The Program should include ministry functionaries with the purpose of establishing important vertical linkages so that local issues can inform policy, and local personnel and leaders can know who to contact in the public and private sectors. The eyes of the Program should be focused on the broad cluster, DR Advantage vision.

This whole approach should feed into the USAID/DR planning process for the medium-term and then inform the design of the follow-on projects that will make up the SO-1 program.

In summary, the highlights of the social organizational theory, found in the original program documents, shaped a social and economic movement of public-private partnership by using participatory planning (be it WSR or the process for the DR Advantage) as a means to build horizontal and vertical linkages between sectors, agencies and organizations. The collective challenge and vision of opportunities was DR-CAFTA. Major components of the projects included capacity building in the technical sense to meet the challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities, in DR-CAFTA. This has been the theory of change aspect of this evaluation. This chapter will highlight the components of the theory of social action found in the Program as the means to program integration.

### **A. THE BROAD CLUSTER CONCEPT: PART OF A SOLUTION**

The term cluster is used in both the DSTA and RED strategies; the previous project (CPP), which included most of the components of the three projects evaluated here, used the term cluster as synonymous with public-private partnerships. The concept was attributed to Michael Porter's work in the 1970s, and many development organizations (such as Chemonics International)<sup>39</sup> used the term as an expansion of the production chain framework so that the public arena, such as public policy and regulation related to private production, would be explicit. Cluster application and the development of clusters also brought into play the concept and theory of social capital<sup>40</sup> which, if not in name, goes back to the participatory development and planning techniques of the 1970s. The broad cluster term used in the title of this chapter can be understood from program documentation and field observations.

### **B. STARTING A MOVEMENT: CLUSTER USE AND DEFINITION IN USAID DOCUMENTATION**

The creation of a movement and the cluster concept can be seen in the evolution of the USAID program from task orders in 1998<sup>41</sup> and 2001,<sup>42</sup> as well as the CPP (2003 - 2007). The project implementer facilitated the integration of the central government policy role with two specific sectors (agriculture and tourism) as a strategy for adjusting to, and preparing for, opportunities afforded by the DR-CAFTA IP commitment. This is the broad cluster concept, i.e., combined public-private sector effort to achieve a national goal. In this case the goal is to be more competitive internationally. That goal was and is in alignment with the USAID/DR strategic objective. More importantly, the broad cluster concept includes the conscious social and economic mobilization of people and Dominican organizations of all types in a national agenda. The use of and comprehension of new vocabulary is necessary for mobilization; the cluster vocabulary is a small part of that and is an important result of the USAID/DR program to date.

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<sup>39</sup> Chemonics executed the CPP (2003-2007) and prior to that two task orders before assuming the DR-CAFTA IP project evaluated here. They used the production chain and cluster terminology in many other parts of the world. The author's experience of their use of the concept includes Peru and Colombia.

<sup>40</sup> "Social capital" consists of linkages, mechanism for discussion and contestation (pluralism), and the solidarity of the group, cluster, or nation. C.f. Merschrod (2008), *A Sociology: the Dynamics of Collectivities*

<sup>41</sup> Competitiveness Strategies for the Dominican Republic (1998-2000)

<sup>42</sup> Policies to Improve Competitiveness in the DR (June 2001-May 2003)

The Mission has consistently stated the goal of a comprehensive movement in various ways, e.g. in the description<sup>43</sup> of The USAID Mission's Strategic Objective No. 1 (SO1): Increase the Number of Policies Adopted that Promote Good Governance for Sustainable Economic Growth in the Dominican Republic, we find:

Consensus building around the direction of reforms and enhanced citizen participation in the decision-making process will be vital to the successful implementation of new policies in a fully democratic system.

This result will be supported by the *reform of key economic policies* and by *changing public and private sector mindsets* on economic and social policies.

USAID will also support policy reform through workshops and seminars with civil society participation to refine policy reform proposals and build consensus for their approval.

The Competitiveness Group, formed in 1997 as part of the USAID support for a national competitiveness strategy, held a series of workshops and in 1999 was described as follows:

The Group's slogan has been DR-Advantage and it has promoted a positive outlook of the country's future and the belief that with vision and determination the Dominican Republic can become a net winner in the global economy.

The concept of cluster was an interesting one to listen to among the people in communities, the producers and implementing project personnel, and was also interesting to read about in the project documents. One woman described it as a cooperative; the directress of a technical school said that any and all organizations with a common interest are members of a cluster (in that case a common interest in a river and waterfall); local business owners admitted that a cluster was like a chamber of commerce except that it had more focus; and another defined it as the unification of the people for a common good.

As found in the documentation from 1998 onward, and as we heard in the field, the folk definition of clusters goes beyond the production chain focus and includes the role of civil society and government. The concept has been incorporated into the vernacular and that is an important accomplishment of the USAID program. The DR-CAFTA IP needs a popular understanding of the Broad Cluster concept as part of its comprehensive movement toward competitiveness and implementation.

Keeping in mind the semantics of the broad cluster concept and the idea that both USAID/DR and the GODR in its NDS have been promoting a vision and a movement, we now turn to the finding and recommendation for fomenting that movement. It is necessary to take into account the evolution of the structure and management style mentioned previously because changing from a mechanically organized structure to a broad-based movement with ample participation requires facilitation with those organizational development concepts in mind as goals.

### **C. FACILITATING THE MOVEMENT: THE NEXT STEPS**

The CPP final report (2007) indicated the need to have the broader cluster perspective that promoted public-private linkages and, more importantly, suggested the type of facilitation needed in the socio-political context:

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<sup>43</sup>Policies to Improve Competitiveness in the Dominican Republic, 2006, p.1

Policy reform initiatives require local champions to provide follow through, from consultant studies to actual reforms. Identifying local champions prior to initiating activities ensures that there will be the necessary follow-up. CPP success in policy reform initiatives, such as many of the DR-CAFTA-related reforms, competition policy, and free zone reform, has been based on these partnerships. (p. 57)

An independent, trusted institution is essential to broker and promote public-private sector partnerships.<sup>44</sup> The CPP's work of informing, growing, and developing cluster programs demonstrated the need for an independent, nongovernmental broker among stakeholders, including between the private sector and communities, and the private and public sectors, to resolve or soften their differences. A government institution may not always have the political space to assume this role.<sup>45</sup> In the CPP's case, cluster technicians took on this role, with leadership from the chief of party. The fact that the CPP was not a Dominican institution, and had no clear stake in particular outcomes, was often of considerable benefit. In the future, such an institution should be Dominican. And if so, it must be highly respected, led by senior Dominicans from the private sector and civil society, and deemed to be above the fray by cluster stakeholders. (p. 58)

In closing, support of the broad cluster movement is necessary because it is and will be the enabling environment<sup>46</sup> that can reasonably be expected to contribute to the USAID overall Economic Growth Objective.

## **V. USAID/DR ASSISTANCE MOST URGENTLY NEEDED**

In this chapter we focus on the overarching recommendations that the Mission should address for the continuity of the Program and that will help prepare for the immediate future. This is in answer to evaluation question #9 in the SOW: *"Based on the experience of the three projects evaluated, in which areas is USAID assistance most urgently needed?"*

### **A. FACILITATION OF THE BROAD CLUSTER CONCEPT**

It is urgent that the Mission focus on the organizational theory that it supported in the early projects and use the strategies and techniques that had been in use (as described in the section above Overarching Recommendation-A Strategy for Building the Broad Cluster) to pull the Program together. This would not only save the USAID/DR investment to date, but it would provide the details of the priorities that exist in the Dominican governance system and the clusters so that the new strategic plan will be aligned with those priorities and with the FtF and GCC priorities of USAID.

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<sup>44</sup> This is known as offering a "neutral table." It is a style of facilitation. DAI used this in the Bangladesh Anti-corruption project that the author evaluated in 2011; it is used in conflict resolution contexts. C.f. Pottebaum, David, Christopher Lee. 2007. In Control of Their Future; Community-led Reconciliation and Recovery. 16 April 2007. (Original version presented at the WIDER Conference on AID: Principles, Policies and Performance. 16-17 June 2006); and for Coastal Zone management involving public and private interests (Merschrod, K. In Search of a Strategy for Coastal Zone Management in the Third World: Notes from Ecuador, Coastal Management, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1988.)

<sup>45</sup> This issue is described in the DR-CAFTA IP evaluation. DICOEX, as a Sub-secretariat was struggling because of its position in the hierarchy. It complained that it did not have the rank or stature to open the doors of ministers.

<sup>46</sup> See Slocum and Merschrod (2002) for a discussion of enabling environments in the USAID context, [http://www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACQ156.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACQ156.pdf)

Both policy and activity synergies should come from this facilitated convention (*convocación*). For example, REDDOM and clusters should bring policy and policy implementation issues from project participants to the table. The facilitation should identify the best Dominican policy dialogue group to take up the issue, and out of the meetings a strategic alliance or working group should form to solve the problem. CDCT and TNC-EPP have policy issues to work on with the Ministries.

DR-CAFTA IP has an interesting structural, hierarchical problem that can be alleviated by a change in the style of management through a reaffirmation of the broad cluster during the facilitation of the workshop proposed. As pointed out in the DR-CAFTA IP evaluation:

In too many cases--DICOEX in the MIC and OCTA in the MAG, for example—administrative levels are too far down the scale of authority to enable entities to make and keep commitments for mutual DR-CAFTA IP implementation support. For example, DICOEX can only encourage participation in critical training events and meetings regarding implementation of a particular DR-CAFTA IP chapter, but it cannot enforce involvement from other GODR entities.

The strategy of the broad cluster workshop would be to facilitate vertical communication and to build support for the commitments so that DICOEX does not need the power to enforce involvement. Instead, the whole enabling structure of the broad cluster would pressure the system to make the needed changes. This may seem idealistic, but the power for enforcement through an extensive policing bureaucracy is both fiscally impossible and the antithesis of the decentralized enabling environment sought.

## **B. THE PROBABILITY OF THE FOUNDATIONS' SUCCESS**

In response to evaluation questions, strategies were recommended for the economic sustainability of REDDOM and CDCT, and a cautionary note was made with regard to other USAID foundation-creating efforts in other counties. The endowment strategy was held up as one of the needed components for building successful foundations. Here we will address an additional perspective—the professional and staffing needs for fundraising. When reviewing the foundations we did not find mention of this need.

Although the goal of the program has been to create self-sustaining foundations to carry on the project functions and to pursue the project goals, it needs to be pointed out that, in doing so, the Mission is adding to each entity a responsibility that requires a skill set that is crucial and yet has not been part of the projects because it has been the responsibility of the consulting firm (AED, Abt, Chemonics). That is, fundraising, proposal writing, grantsmanship, networking to identify funding sources, and so forth all form what is sometimes called development or donor relations. In addition to the talent, it should be pointed out that consulting firms spend hundreds of thousands of dollars per year, sometimes per proposal, when responding to RFPs published by USAID. These functions are carried out by experienced and skilled staffs who constantly comb donor agencies worldwide seeking new business. In the local NGO world,<sup>47</sup> when funds are low or projects are about to end, the whole team then takes time out from their activities to put together proposals. Usually, the director or the entrepreneurial person who created the organization is constantly watching for funding opportunities and networking to gather

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<sup>47</sup> The INGOs (international Non-profit, private, non-governmental organizations) operate and for all intents and purposes are structured similar to the for-profit consulting firms. That is, specialized fund-seeking staff.

information. In the absence of an endowment, these foundations will have to develop and staff the fundraising skills necessary for self-sustainability. Among the various recommendations by the RED evaluation team, it was noted that those fundraising strategies need a set of skills not found in the projects. In the case of CDCT those fundraisings skills were also needed.

It is urgent that USAID/DR consider its options because it is not probable that the foundations will be able to do the considerable work that needs to be done to develop the clusters and, simultaneously, go through the organizational development needed to become independent from USAID funding and to generate new business in the next 18 months. They will, however, need at least two to three years of organizational development in fundraising and proposal writing to generate an income stream to support the work begun as projects. Can USAID fund that organizational development?

If the Mission cannot fund the organizational development of these foundations, then it would be better to continue a goal entailing that the foundations be partners with local or international firms that will concern themselves with the competition for funds while DSTA and REDDOM focus on the technical services delivery in their respective cluster areas. That would be a model of partnership whereby international consulting firms, when bidding on USAID or other donor projects, include the foundations as partners. This is not uncommon and when doing so exclusive commitment is not practiced. Indeed, USAID missions have made it explicit that these partners can be included in responses to RFPs on a non-exclusive basis. Still, it is important and urgent that the strategy for sustainability be realistic and clearly part of the fifth-year extensions.

### **C. DECISION ON THE FIFTH-YEAR EXTENSIONS**

From the initial mid-term briefings through the final drafts presented, all three project evaluators point out the urgency for a decision regarding an extension for the fifth year. The decision and the commitment for the fifth-year extensions are needed to avoid the loss of personnel and momentum. Uncertainty regarding the decision causes personnel loss and, without a commitment (contract and approved budget), the projects cannot promote and schedule the first activities that would be carried out during the new year.

### **D. MONITORING AND EVALUATION: STUDIES AND RESEARCH**

Although studies and research will probably invoke a visceral reaction at this stage of the Program and in a context of urgency, the evaluators of the three projects have pointed out basic areas that need, and have needed, attention. This information need is presented here because this kind of research would provide immediate focus, as the evaluators of DR-CAFTA IP and RED have pointed out as noted below:

- DR-CAFTA IP—It was noted that there were “Incompatibilities between DR-CAFTA IP compliance scheduling and USAID/DR development assistance programming. The schedule and structure—by industry and trade area—for DR-CAFTA IP compliance introduces for the DR-CAFTA IP a set of support priorities that differ from those priorities in the USAID Mission economic growth strategy.”

The research called for would be to identify the order of compliance needs and to use that order to plan project support. The research called for is not esoteric and may be revealed as easily as an examination of the tariff figures presented in this report or the proposed broad cluster strategic planning.

- RED—There is a need for searches for new agricultural crops that might be grown successfully to take advantage of the DR-privileged access to U.S. or European markets. Again, this is not a complex chore because actual imports by country are available to compare with DR ecological possibilities. The window markets are also known, and by linking to the brokers and exporters in both the DR and abroad, this information would be obtained.

On future projects, USAID should provide greater guidance and support for monitoring and evaluation. The evaluators found that there was a general lack of strong monitoring and evaluation systems at the project level. This diminished the ability to show change over time in outcomes. There are several initiatives underway that may improve this capability in the future.

USAID/DR has signed up to participate in the Chief Information Officer's (CIO) Mission Portfolio Management System (MPMS) pilot project.<sup>48</sup> This pilot project should increase the awareness of the need for in-Mission technical skills and for appropriate M&E systems in funded projects. Ideally, those systems should generate data for importation to the Mission MPMS. The Mission should require as a deliverable, at the same time as the project's Performance Management Plan (PMP), a system for data entry, analysis and reporting into which field staff, trainers, and project managers can enter data.

The draft Parameters Identification Paper (PIP) mentions the need for a geographic focus. Databases linked to a geographic information system (GIS) have been the standard in some USAID missions because, as in the case of the DR, the focus is on overlaying specific crops. The evaluations of the three projects developed a map (see Figure 5) that showed sensitive crops and the location of the three projects to illustrate the overlay of the projects and the crops of interest. This is the kind of geographic information that should be integral to M&E for USAID/DR.

From a broader M&E scope, USAID should conduct a LAPOP survey<sup>49</sup> so that a specific set of questions could be used to measure citizen knowledge of, and the results of, the Program. The sample design could include a rural and urban focus, and it should also have a geographic stratification related to the major areas of sensitive crops. Cluster area sampling might be too expensive but should be explored.<sup>50</sup>

The transition from the first competitiveness task order to the present three projects<sup>51</sup> meant going from a single and relatively simple managerial task with one implementing partner and a project officer to multiple implementing partners that required multiple-CTO oversight. At each stage, the effort to facilitate interaction and synergies between projects increased, as did the technical expertise to assure relevant content. The envisioned transitions to the non-profit organizations (CDCT and REDDOM) to carry on the projects will make the integration task even more difficult. Nevertheless, these recommendations will help the Mission to re-establish momentum and guide the Program for the next five years.

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<sup>48</sup> USAID - Agency-wide, IT Transition 184-15-01-01-01-2022-00. "This would provide for development of interfaces between business systems and/or new tools that utilize data from one or more independent systems."

<sup>49</sup> The next LAPOP survey is planned for the first calendar quarter of 2012. (correspondence with Mitch Seligson, founder and director of LAPOP, July 2011)

<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that once the sampling frame is designed, it generally, cannot be subdivided for inference to smaller area units such as by cluster unless the cluster area is contiguous with municipality and the sample design was for municipal inference (Based on sampling theory and also the author's experience with LAPOP in Colombia.)

<sup>51</sup> There are actually four projects when the TNC EPP is included

## VI. BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Overall, the cluster strategy was the best practice introduced during the CPP stage of the economic growth program because it encompassed both the production and policy aspects of the DR-CAFTA challenges and opportunities. The cluster strategy is an advance over production chain analysis because it brings into the analysis the enabling political and economic entities, and as described in the analysis, it lends itself to the start of a movement at both a local and national level. Also, as shown in the analysis and evolution of the program, the methods used for starting the Program come from a long history of participatory best practices.

Within the cluster strategy the best practice of participatory planning was seen as a national-level effort that produced the DR advantage. DSTA used the same method in their “whole sector in a room” (WSR) methodology for the tourism sector, and as part of DSTA, TNC used the same technique at the community level to assess the local community tourism assets and to establish community priorities for establishing or improving their tourism business. In each case, however, they used the concept of cluster to make the strategic planning process inclusive.

Likewise, linking local needs with policy and regulatory change fits the cluster strategy well and comes out of the strategic planning methodology. It is a practice of facilitating public-private dialogue and collaboration in order to advocate for changes in policy and regulations so that local social and economic change can take place as well as be more efficient or competitive. One of the DR-CAFTA IP examples was streamlining the business start-up process that resulted in a much quicker timetable and fewer agencies to grant approval. An ongoing example from DSTA is the work that TNC has done with the environmental ministry to write regulations for qualification and fee structures so that non-governmental organizations can assume management or co-management positions in protected areas. The policy change that would enable these new regulations was being negotiated at the time of the evaluation.

Finally, most of the projects in the Program strived for media attention, produced announcements, and tracked the coverage, but the best practice was DSTA’s effort to cultivate the media and actually strengthen media coverage of the tourism sector. The result was not only better and increased coverage, but an unexpected outcome was that the Dominican journalism society, in its annual awards for reporting, added an award for tourism coverage.

## VII. THE PROGRAM FIT WITH NEW USAID GCC AND FTF INITIATIVES

In the scope of work the Mission requested that the evaluation “*lay foundations for new interventions to address new Presidential Initiatives and achieve the overall objective of competitive and (environmentally) sustainable economic opportunities and livelihoods for poverty eradication in the Dominican Republic.*”

Two new Presidential initiatives are the Global Hunger (Feed the Future) and Global Climate Change Initiatives. In an April 24, 2010 press release USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah announced the 20 focus countries of the U.S. Government’s Global Hunger initiative—also known as the Feed the Future (FtF) initiative—which aims to reduce poverty, hunger, and undernutrition. The Dominican Republic is not one of the 20 focus countries, but has been allocated FtF funding to address food security needs in the poorest and at-risk regions of the country. The second new Presidential initiative, Global Climate Change Initiative, has included the Dominican Republic as a recipient of funding in FY 2012 for implementing its “sustainable landscapes” pillar programs.

The current projects in the Mission's Economic Growth Program form a solid basis for advancing both FtF and GCC because they have poverty reduction, environmental protection, and conservation of natural resources as their goals. Further, in the case of the DSTA and RED projects, application of the clusters approach provides a unique Dominican experience to the implementation of these two initiatives, an approach that may have applicability beyond the DR. The development hypotheses of the three projects are as valid today under the new initiatives as they were when designed. The need for rural economic diversification—particularly of its agriculture and tourism sectors—is clear, and the need for policy reform to meet local development needs continues.

USAID/DR can use GCC and FtF funding to engage CDCT and REDDOM beyond the life of the current DSTA and RED projects. For example, anticipated GCC Initiative funds for “sustainable landscape” activities in the DR offers one such opportunity for USAID/DR to engage the CDCT as an implementing partner—and thus continue to build its organizational capacity—in support of nature tourism clusters around or in protected areas of vulnerable habitat where biodiversity is threatened. In fact, the DR, with its clusters approach to sustainable (nature-based) tourism, can offer unique experiences to the GCC “sustainable landscapes” strategy. Similarly, USAID/DR can channel part or all of its FtF Initiative funding through REDDOM as an implementing partner to support development of producer clusters in low-income rural areas to improve their food security. In both cases, GCC and FtF funding can be used to launch the CDCT and REDDOM foundations on a self-sustaining trajectory by engaging them as implementing partners who will be “learning by doing.”

The Mission, when defending its funding request for this Program, should point out potential synergies with other donor programs. Two examples are: 1) the continued reengineering of the Environment Ministry with WB GEF that has been so useful for the TNC-EPP effort for policy regarding co-administration of protected areas, and 2) the IDB has been a partner with USAID programs since the CPP and has an ongoing Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative (SECCI).

One strategy for the Mission's defense of the Program would be to make the case, as we have throughout this report, that the effort to make DR-CAFTA a success has only begun, and that the need to succeed in the coming five years as the tariff barriers are reduced is as great as it was during the last five years, if not more so. Furthermore, the history of the Program as an investment should be invoked as an ongoing commitment to both mitigate the impact of the DR-CAFTA on sensitive crops and products, and to help increase the competitiveness of the DR in order to take advantage of the DR-CAFTA trade opportunities.

In conclusion, the evaluators recommend that the Mission should keep the focus of the Program on its original and valid rationale, that is, make DR-CAFTA a success for the Dominicans by diversifying agriculture and tourism while assisting in policy reform through DR-CAFTA implementation.

**ANNEXES**

**ANNEX A: SCOPE OF WORK.....i**  
**ANNEX B REFERENCES .....xxi**  
**ANNEX C: CONTACTS.....xxv**

## ANNEX A: SCOPE OF WORK

AID-517-TO-11-00001  
DR-CAFTA Tri-Project Evaluation

### SECTION C - DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS

#### C.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The team includes evaluation experts with strong technical skills and understanding of the context for the proposed evaluations. We have proposed a robust methodological approach for evaluating the program; an aggressive implementation plan that will complete the evaluations in a timely and effective manner; and a proposal that is responsive to Administrator Shah's renewed emphasis on rigorous program and project evaluations.

The team will conduct evaluations of the DR-CAFTA Implementation Project (DR-CAFTA IP), the Rural Economic Diversification (RED) project and the Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance (DSTA) program. The team will also prepare a Final Integrated Evaluation. The evaluations will allow the Mission and implementers to make mid-course corrections. Additionally, the evaluations will aid the Mission to assess how its support to the Dominican economy has contributed to the Mission's Strategic Objective (SO-1) of "Increased sustainable economic opportunities for the poor" by achieving - Per its IR 1.1 - "Improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican Economy." Finally, the findings, conclusions and recommendations from these evaluations will support the Mission as inputs for learning and future planning.

To conduct these evaluations, the team will use a mixed-method approach that draws on the following evaluation methods:

- Qualitative Measures of Organizational Development (Capacity Building)
- Qualitative Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Analysis
- Quantitative Quasi-Experimental Design Comparisons
- Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

The team will work in consultation with the Mission to finalize the methods given priorities identified during the orientation and data available. The newly released USAID Evaluation Policy and updated ACS Chapter 203 "TIPS" for impact evaluations will serve as guiding principles for the application of these methods.

The team will also ensure that the evaluations include sex disaggregated data when relevant and possible; a focus on GODR counterpart, local stakeholder and beneficiary engagement; and will ensure reporting quality and evaluation best practices.

It is included a comprehensive and practical implementation plan that incorporates USAID, DR-CAFTA IP, USAID/RED, and DSTA implementing partners and stakeholders, and includes time for document review, data collection, key site visits, briefings and ample time for sharing findings and recommendations with USAID and implementing partners.

The team will begin with three weeks of primary and secondary data collection that will include extensive interaction with USAID, projects/program implementers, and beneficiaries. The fourth and fifth weeks of the evaluation will be devoted to analysis and presentation of initial findings. During weeks six and seven, USAID will review the draft evaluations, and during weeks eight and nine, the team will revise these drafts and submit the final Project Specific Evaluation Reports and the Final Integrated Evaluation. The team will consult with USAID and project implementers throughout the entire process.

**ACRONYMS**

AMAP	Accelerated Micro-enterprise Advancement Project
AMEX	AMEX International, Inc.
CAFTA-DR	Central American Free Trade Agreement (including the Dominican Republic)
CNC	National Competitiveness Council (Acronym for Spanish title)
CODOPYME	Dominican Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises (Spanish acronym)
CONEP	National Council of Private Business (Acronym for Spanish title)
COP	Chief of Party
DICOEX	Directorate of Foreign Trade (Acronym for the Spanish title)
DSTA	Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance program
FTF	Feed the Future initiative of the US President
GODR	Government of the Dominican Republic
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IR	Intermediate Result
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PC	Participación Ciudadana
PID	Democratic Initiative Project
PPL/LER	Policy, Planning and Learning office of Learning, Evaluation and Research
RED	Rural Economic Diversification project
SEA	State Secretariat for Agriculture
SET	State Secretariat for Labor
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
US DOL	US Department of Labor
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WTO	World Trade Organizatio

## C.2 BACKGROUND

It has been four years since the Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) ratified the Free Trade Agreement for Central America and the Dominican Republic (DR-CAFTA). This time period provides an excellent opportunity to identify and examine institutional changes, particularly those related to the three areas supported by the Mission: DR-CAFTA agreement compliance, rural economic diversification and sustainable tourism.

The team understands that the evaluations will allow the Mission to make mid-course corrections in the on-going projects and programs, as well as to design new strategic initiatives for the next planning cycle. Above all, implementing the Statement of Work (SOW) will enable the Mission to be fully responsive to the USAID Administrator's renewed emphasis on rigorous program and project evaluations both to document impact attributed to Agency interventions, as well as to learn from past experiences about what works well and why.

**Learning from project performance.** The Mission has allocated significant resources to improve the GODR's capacity to cultivate, in the context of CAFTA-DR incentives and rules-based trade, reforms that foster export-led diversification of its economy. The Mission's operating hypothesis is that effective implementation of trade reforms can improve the competitiveness, reduce the risks and increase the income earning potential of small and micro entrepreneurs in the agriculture and tourism sectors as part of the Mission's overall strategy to alleviate poverty.

The evaluations will help the Mission assess how its support to the Dominican economy - through DR-CAFTA implementation, rural enterprise development and sustainable tourism - has contributed to the Mission's Strategic Objective (SO-1) of "Increased sustainable economic opportunities for the poor" by achieving - Per its IR 1.1 - "Improved conditions for a more competitive Dominican Economy."

The team will evaluate contributions of the three Mission projects/program to achieve the Mission's strategic objective outcomes. The team will examine how these outcomes are manifested and measure the extent to which they have increased economic opportunities, particularly for the poor. The DR-CAFTA Implementation Project (DR-CAFTA IP), the Rural Economic Diversification (RED) project and the Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance (DSTA) program each contribute to the core concern of 'sustainability' by focusing on 'economic competitiveness' which is a common pre-requisite of sustainability. It is economic competitiveness and opportunity - central to all three of these projects - which the team will use as focus of its evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations.

**Looking ahead to new strategic interventions and initiatives.**

The team will also work with the Mission to focus its findings and conclusions to look forward toward the implications for future strategy and projects/programs. For example, will explore how the projects/program lay the groundwork and provide opportunities for the Mission to implement new Presidential initiatives including Food Security (Feed the Future) and Global Climate Change mitigation. Creating jobs, as well as increasing and diversifying the country's rural economic base - and with it increased production, employment, trade and incomes - contributes directly to the capacity and security of Dominicans in having the capacity to meet the food needs of their households. The fashion with which production takes place can be environmentally positive, as well as enhance Dominican competitiveness (e.g., by cultivating organic crops, conserving water, and sustainably harvesting and using forest products).

In summary, the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations from team's evaluation will be presented in a format that provides the Mission with inputs for its next strategic planning cycle. In that context, the team will examine the extent to which the three projects/program have contributed not only to the Mission's current strategic objective of sustainable competitiveness and economic opportunity, particularly for the country's poorest households, but also the degree to which these projects/program have laid the groundwork for food security and environmentally sustainable production. Based on those findings, the evaluation will provide conclusions and recommendations to assist the Mission in designing new programs to implement the two presidential initiatives.

While each of the projects/program evaluation reports will emphasize respective contributions to future USAID programming, the Final Integrated Evaluation will emphasize how these three projects can best mutually reinforce each other. It will also lay foundations for new interventions to address new Presidential Initiatives and achieving the overall objective of competitive and (environmentally) sustainable economic opportunities and livelihoods for poverty eradication in the Dominican Republic. The Final Integrated Evaluation will also highlight over-arching lessons learned and best practices that can be mutually shared among the three projects/program implementers and counterparts - as well as implementers and counterparts in other parts of the USAID/DR assistance portfolio - to best conduct their interventions.

### **C.3 METHODOLOGY AND TECHNICAL APPROACH**

#### **C.3.1 Evaluation Objective**

Mission management is an important 'first client' for the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations but the team believes that the evaluations can serve a broader audience of users as well.

The evaluations provide the opportunity to hold the three implementing partners and their staffs accountable in terms of how well they have achieved tangible results and substantive impact. In turn, the Mission is responsible for disclosing findings to a broad range of stakeholders. The team will conduct the evaluation as a learning and motivating tool for program implementers to benefit as well help them to understand what is working and why.

The evaluation also sends signals to GODR agencies and private sector firms and organizations that USAID is concerned about making lasting changes in the capacity - and competitiveness - to move the Dominican Republic onto a new economic growth trajectory consistent with the country's revealed comparative advantage in domestic and international markets, particularly in the context of DR-CAFTA. Where, for example, are the emerging niche markets for Dominican agricultural produce abroad? For Dominican tourism services nationally? The evaluation can serve as a useful tool for advancing the GODR's agenda for economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation.

#### **C.3.2 Evaluation Methodology**

The team is aware that the Agency has issued a new "USAID Evaluation Policy" in the course of the solicitation that resulted in this evaluation. That policy includes explicit criteria for ensuring the quality of evaluation reporting. Further, USAID has released, on its expanded evaluation web-pages, updates of several of its M&E "TIPS" for implementing Directive 203 evaluation procedures.

The three projects to be evaluated were designed and launched before the new USAID Evaluation Policy and TIPS guidelines, and do not always include baseline and periodic update data that would support the new evaluation rigor that the Agency seeks. Still, the team will apply the new USAID evaluation guidance to available project indicator data in combination with data generated by the team as a basis for quantifiable or qualitative measures of project/program impact that meet the new USAID evaluation standards and lay the ground work for future program assessments.

For example, the team proposed conducting small survey interviews - within budget and time constraints - that go beyond just verifying the number of DR-CAFTA IP, RED, and DSTA beneficiaries reported to be "trained" to include more substantive measures of the quality of that training, resulting changes in beneficiary practices, and job and income levels; measures that describe projects/program outcomes and well as outputs.

The team will employ a "mixed-methods" evaluation approach to examining the three USAID/DR Projects and for addressing the range of questions in the solicitation SOW. Application of these tools will vary among the three projects as appropriate for each and in function to where they are - at this mid-term evaluation point -- in achieving their stated results and objectives. Also, the team will apply evaluation methodologies that correspond to two levels of performance and impact to address:

- **Indirect beneficiary agencies and organizations targeted** for enhancing their capacity to delivery services or implement policies to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of...
- **Direct beneficiary firms and households** targeted for assistance in increasing sales, investments, incomes and employment.

The approach also includes application of cross-cutting concerns that will apply to all three of the separate projects/program evaluations as well as the integrated evaluation report. Specifically,

- **Sex Disaggregated (and other beneficiary) Data and Gender Analysis.** Through-out, the team will disaggregate evaluation findings to examine projects/program performance and impact among target populations of particular concern to USAID development assistance: women and youth, the disabled, those individuals and households below the poverty line, those small enterprises with capital and technology limitations and constraints.
- **GODR Counterpart, Local Stakeholder and Beneficiary Engagement.** The team believes the evaluations should emphasize feedback from each project's direct and indirect beneficiaries about the impacts that these projects/program have had on their abilities to provide services and support and to take advantage of new economic opportunities and to achieve sustainable and respectable livelihoods.
- **Evaluation Best Practices and Reporting Quality.** The new Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning's Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research (PPL/LER) "USAID Evaluation Policy" lists ten important criteria to apply to Agency evaluations in the future. (A copy of the USAID Evaluation Policy may be found at [www.usaid.gov/evaluation/](http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/)). While issued after the RFTOP solicitation was released, the Policy will provide the guidance for Team AMEX evaluation activities and reporting for the USAID/DR Projects/Programs. In its evaluation reports, for example, the

team will fully document through technical annexes all the data collection instruments and procedures followed so as to provide documentation for the soundness of the findings, conclusions and recommendations made.

Below are descriptions of the principal evaluation methods and some illustrative applications for each that the team will use. The team will make its final determination of the most appropriate evaluation tools and their application in consultation with the USAID Mission after contract signing and during development of the Evaluation Work Plan.

**1. Qualitative Measures of Organizational Development (Capacity Building)**

The DR-CAFTA IP and to a lesser extent the RED project and DSTA program are directed toward building institutional capacity and introducing reforms aimed at improving competitive conditions and increasing economic opportunities particularly for small enterprises and low-income workers. DR-CAFTA in particular sets guidelines for establishing regulatory and monitoring agencies to track compliance with the Agreement's terms and conditions. Introducing reforms and building institutions to implement them is a process involving several steps along a continuum toward full DR-CAFTA compliance or effective support for rural enterprise diversification or sustainable tourism.

The team will introduce as part of its evaluation process a ranking or scoring of where target GODR agencies and private entities (CODOPYME, CONEP and their affiliate industry and commerce trade organizations) are located along this policy reform and organizational development continuum as a means for validating progress made as well as for recommendations regarding needs for further capacity building effort and support. Typically, and by way of illustration, such scores take the following form:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Organizational Development Status</u>
0	= No reform measure/policy exists or has been proposed
1	= Reform measure/policy drafted but not approved
2	= Reform measure/policy approved/legislated but implementing agency/office not selected/established
3	= Implementing agency/office selected/established but not funded or staffed
4	= Implementing agency/office funded but not staffed
5	= Implementing agency/office funded and staffed
6	= Implementing agency/office functioning effectively for at least one year

Of these status scores, a 0 through 5 ranking will be verified by documentation such as approved legislations, budgets and staffing levels. A status score 6 will be verified through beneficiary feedback by applying KAP Analysis described below. Of course, many GODR

agencies existed before CAFTA-DR; still, to achieve DR-CAFTA compliance these agencies often need added mandates, budgets and staff to implement their new mandates.

Similar scores can be generated for private sector organizations. The evaluations will consider such scoring as a vehicle for ranking GODR reforms and implementing agencies as a mechanism for establishing status scores at project outset and at the time of the evaluation. The status scores can then quickly identify progress made by any particular agency in improving the status of its implementation capacity as well as suggest by comparison with other agencies which agencies would warrant added resources and effort to improve their capacity (status) for implementing their mandates as laid out in each of the three USAID projects/programs being evaluated.

## **2. Qualitative "Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices" (KAP) Analysis**

A major evaluation method the team will employ to gather beneficiary level impact is "Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices" (KAP) Analysis. Through direct individual structured interviews with randomly selected sample of direct beneficiaries of the RED project and the DSTA program, KAP Analysis will capture the extent to which they are knowledgeable about new economic opportunities, are motivated to seek out these opportunities and are in fact engaging in such opportunities through new practices that RED and DSTA make possible. The KAP analysis will also include, through focus groups and key-informant gatherings, an assessment of what constraints beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries face in engaging in new RED and DSTA sponsored economic opportunities. What are the comparable characteristics of beneficiary and non-beneficiary participants? What determined participation and non-participation and why?

The evaluation's timeframe and funding realities dictate the sample size, statistical rigor and the extent of interview data that can be collected in the field. Nevertheless, the team is serious in its proposal to include, to the extent possible, the ultimate beneficiary 'clients' of these programs and to learn from them directly about what has worked well and why, what should be dropped, and what should be adjusted or expanded in these three on-going projects/programs and in future initiatives implemented by USAID/DR.

The team proposed to apply KAP analysis to assessing what is essentially an 'intent to treat' approach to examining how cost-effectively RED and DSTA are delivering technical advisory and other services to target beneficiary populations. "Intent to treat" analysis is a rigorous evaluation tool used most frequently in the health field to examine not the effect of, for example, a new vaccine, but rather how comprehensive, targeted and cost-effective was the delivery of vaccination services to the potential beneficiary population.

A comparable application for the DR evaluations will be a measure of the cost-effectiveness with which technical advice, production

credits, market price information or production inputs was provided to target SME producer beneficiaries.

Determining where beneficiaries are along the 'knowledge, attitudes and practices' continuum will address questions about what are the best - cost-effective approaches for delivery, say, of know-how, credit, or market price information to potential new entrepreneurs whether they are emerging small rural enterprise owners seeking to improve their competitiveness in the country's high value agricultural product production (value) chains or larger established firms seeking to expand their investments and hire more Dominicans to produce for international markets - within DR- CAFTA or beyond.

**i. Quantitative Quasi-experimental Design Comparisons**

There does not appear to exist for any of the three projects available randomized trials baseline data that could be updated by the evaluation in order to compare performance of 'beneficiary' groups - e.g., rural enterprises, small tourism operators, etc. - with any control group of 'non-participants'. Still, a quasi-experimental design approach can be applied to measuring USAID project beneficiaries' current conditions with, say, those of comparable national or international population averages.

For example, is there evidence in RED project areas of less unemployment now than at project start-up? Less unemployment compared to national averages or to other regions of the country? That small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are gaining 'market share' in sectors and for commodities where the greatest growth in markets and trade is anticipated? In selecting which variables to use for analytical comparisons the AMEX Team will look at the SO Results Frameworks and quantifiable performance indicators for baseline data on each firm against which participant and non-participant comparisons can be made.

**ii. Cost-effectiveness Analysis**

The team will approach the questions in the Solicitation by utilizing available data, particularly for the RED and DSTA projects, to compare the benefits - for example, investments made, production increased and jobs generated - of selected project/program interventions to their respective costs. These ratios can then be compared internally among each project's activities and then between the projects themselves.

For example, what is the relative cost-effective among selected DSTA interventions at generating sustainable jobs? Among RED interventions and specific commodities and rural enterprises? Between the DSTA program and RED project? Of course, there are many "externalities" that may influence the outcomes of these comparisons and many comparisons may lead to 'close calls' not sufficiently different to draw conclusions. Still the evaluation will seek to identify where there may indeed be some clearly

visible distinctions in cost-effectiveness comparisons to give the Mission sufficient confidence in determining interventions to expand, discontinue or maintain at current levels.

### 3. Illustrative Application of Mixed-Method Evaluation Approaches

Table 1 illustrates which evaluation methods will be applied to gather input for addressing the 10 questions in the Solicitation.

As part of its first deliverable to the Mission, the team will include in its detailed evaluation design and work plan when each of these methods would be employed and for which project/program examined and evaluation question addressed.

During work plan preparation and document review the team will consult with the Mission on the most appropriate methods to use for these 10 questions and for any others identified to be covered in the evaluation.

<b>Table 1: Illustrative Application of Methods to Respond to Evaluation Questions</b>				
<b>Evaluation Questions to be Addressed*</b>	<b>Qualitative Measures of Organization Development</b>	<b>KAP Analysis</b>	<b>Quasi-experimental Comparison</b>	<b>Cost-Benefit Analysis</b>
1. What did each project achieve?	x	x	x	x
2. What factors constrained implementation?	x	x		
3. What are views of implementers, beneficiaries with respect to weaknesses etc.		x		
4. What course corrections need to be made to accelerate progress	x			x
5. What implementation course corrections were made?	x			
6. What new best practices were identified?		x	x	x
7. What major lessons learned emerged?		x	x	x
8. What have been the strengths/weaknesses of the projects/programs?	x			
9. In what areas is USAID assistance most urgently needed?	x	x		

10. What opportunities are there for increased coordination of activities, etc?	x			
* As listed in the Solicitation				

**DR-CAFTA IP.** To test the development hypothesis that *increased DR capacity to comply with the 'rules of trade' will improve the country's enabling environment and economic incentives for the private sector to take and manage the risks of expanding investment, production and trade*, the team will review the literature to determine what industry sector data exist that would allow a quasi-experimental design comparison of the extent to which changes in DR domestic production and trade trends and composition can ultimately be attributed to DR-CAFTA agreement compliance fostered and supported by the project.

The team recognizes that it takes time to implement DR-CAFTA provisions and even more time for markets to respond, investments to be made, and production to adjust to new trading realities. In the event that reliable comparable data are available, the evaluation will seek to determine which commodity groups - starting with the list proposed in the RFTOP SOW - hold promise as useful 'barometers' for tracking changes in economic conditions and opportunities that are traceable to DR-CAFTA in the short, medium and longer terms.

Where the introduction and implementation of CAFTA-DR rules of trade are still 'in process' the evaluation will apply a KAP analysis to assess where responsible GODR agencies are along the continuum of organizational development to meet CAFTA-DR compliance requirements, particularly as regards DICOEX monitoring, analysis, communications and public relations capabilities of DICOEX and other GODR agencies engaged in DR-CAFTA compliance and implementation-e.g., ANAPI, SEA, SET.

The team will make use of existing baseline studies of these institutions against which progress has been made to date and relate that progress to the various interventions-workshops, seminars, training, advisory assistance-implemented to date.

**RED.** To test the RED development hypothesis that *risk for rural-based agricultural producers and other commodity value chain participants can be reduced through diversification into higher-value enterprises and that domestic markets and export trade can be the engines for creating jobs, generating incomes, and reducing poverty*, the team's evaluation method of choice will largely be KAP analysis to determine what changes in beneficiary knowledge, attitudes and practices can be attributed to project interventions - e.g., improved practices in natural resource management, organic farming and sustainable forest product harvesting, post harvest waste reduction and value added processing, marketing through trade fair participation, commercial linkages and conflict resolution. The evaluation would also apply

cost-benefit analysis of compare the relative benefits of these interventions with their respective costs for the principle agricultural or processed commodities for which production, employment and sales data exist to help the Mission identify the most promising economic activities to which to provide future project support and eliminate those enterprises with the lowest rates of return for rural enterprises and households.

**DSTA.** To test the DSTA development hypothesis that *well-designed and appropriately targeted interventions can build capacity of local firms and community organizations to be self-sustaining participants in the highly competitive Dominican tourism industry*, the team will apply qualitative organizational development measures to DSTA development of relevant tourism entities including, community-based tourism organizations and partnerships in tourism service delivery value chains, such as handicraft and tour-guide services with national parks or with international hotel/resort franchises. Since training will be an on-going requirement for reaching new beneficiaries, the evaluation will also apply a qualitative organizational development analysis to assess the degree to which GODR agencies or local NGOs have been equipped and are ready to continue training activities after project termination.

Both the RED and DSTA projects involve a range of training programs as one of the interventions aimed at bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices among beneficiaries. Through both individual beneficiary interviews and focus group sessions, Team AMEX will examine how this training is manifested among a sample of training participants and the degree to which training has been effective in moving these beneficiaries along the KAP continuum.

The above approaches are illustrative at this point and will be finalized as part of the first deliverable - a Detailed Evaluation Design and Proposed Work Plan - in consultation with the Mission during the first week the team will be in country.

The objective of the team's evaluation methodology is to provide the Mission the most rigorous evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations possible by applying those statistical tools appropriate for available data and for using the most appropriate evaluation tools from USAID's "Evaluation Toolkit" so that the Mission can:

- Assess accurately where it is in achieving its overall Strategic Objectives;
- Determine what have been the most cost-effective approaches to achieving progress;
- Identify what should be expanded and what should be cut back or eliminated for more effective program execution;
- Design new approaches to implementing new Presidential Initiatives - Food Security (FTF) and Global Climate Change - for the Dominican context.

Table 2 below summarizes the methods that will be used to respond to the project specific evaluation questions and test their development hypothesis.

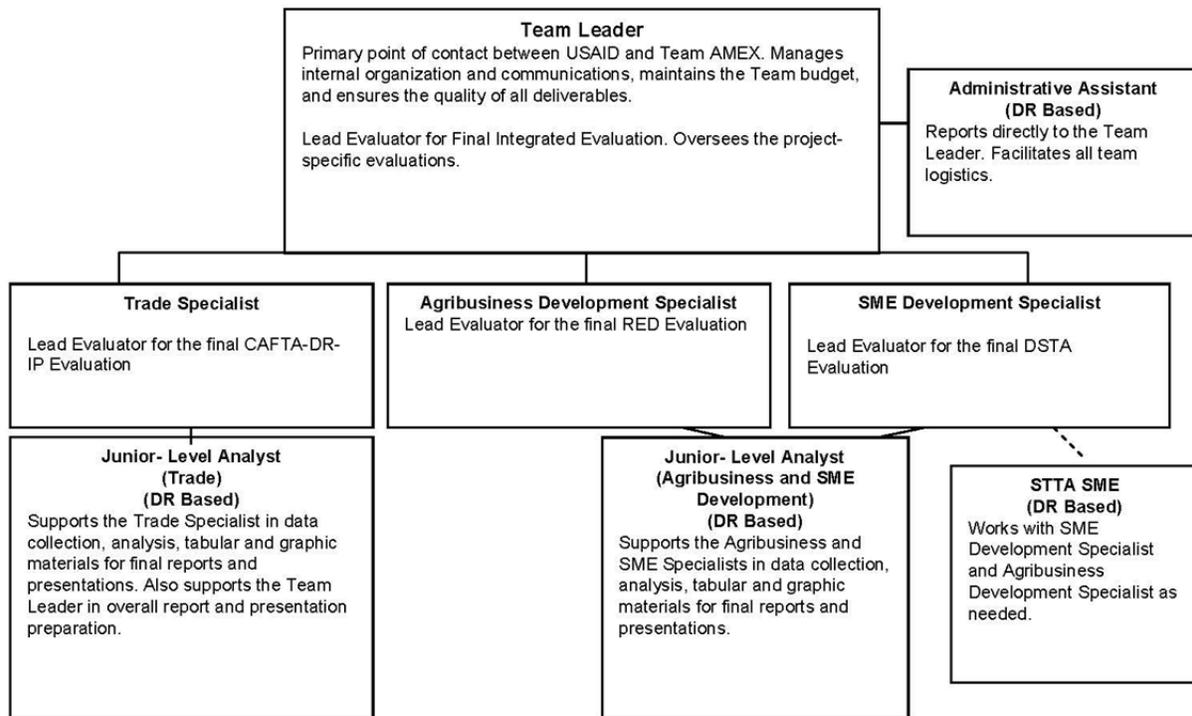
<b>Table 2: Relationship between Methodology, Development Hypothesis, and Key Questions</b>			
	<b>DR-CAFTA IP</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>DSTA</b>
<b>Methodology for Evaluation (Illustrative Example)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quasi-experimental design comparison</li> <li>• KAP Analysis</li> <li>• Qualitative Measures of Organizational development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KAP Analysis</li> <li>• Cost-Benefit Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative Measures of Organizational development</li> <li>• KAP Analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Program Development Hypothesis</b>	<i>Increased DR capacity to comply with the 'rules of trade' will improve the country's enabling environment and economic incentives for the private sector to take and manage the risks of expanding investment, production and trade.</i>	<i>Risk for rural-based agricultural producers and other commodity value chain participants can be reduced through diversification into higher-value enterprises and that domestic markets and export trade can be the engines for creating jobs, generating incomes, and reducing poverty.</i>	<i>Well-designed and appropriately targeted interventions can build capacity of local firms and community organizations to be self-sustaining participants in the highly competitive Dominican tourism industry.</i>
<b>Key Questions for Evaluation</b>	Relative to the goal of effectively implementing all 22 chapters of the CAFTA-DR Free-trade agreement, what results were achieved in strengthening the DICOEX, in advancing treat-specific reforms, and informing the Dominican private sector of the related trade opportunities?	Relative to the goal of assisting small farm producers and processors to diversify their production and become more competitive in the global market for oriental vegetables, specialty coffee, mangoes, organic banana, pineapple, avocado, root crops, cacao, and manufactured wood products, what results were achieved or progress made toward the results in a variety of specific areas as listed in the RFTOP?	Relative to the goal of better equipping and strengthening local small firms, community-based tourism organizations, and relevant tourism entities to become sustainable within the next five years, what results were achieved or progress made toward developing public-private collaboration and outreach to new development partners at the national, regional, and global levels that are subsequently led by stronger, more capable Dominican tourism institutions?

**NOTE:** The methodology application noted above will serve as a starting point for consultation with USAID. Depending on information available, cost and time constraints, some methods may be used more, less, or differently in evaluating programs.

**4. Implementation Plan**

The team will work together to complete the three evaluations and the integrated evaluation in the most efficient manner possible. The organization chart below outlines the key positions that make up the team and their respective responsibilities.

**Figure 1: Organizational Structure**



The team proposes a comprehensive and reasonable work plan that incorporates USAID, DR-CAFTA IP, USAID/RED, and DSTA implementing partners and stakeholders, and includes time for document review, data collection, key site visits, briefings and ample time for sharing findings and recommendations with USAID and implementing partners.

Table 3 below provides a detailed timeline for the evaluation implementation. Following the table a description of the Scope of Work for each period outlined is provided in detail.

Table 3: Draft Work Plan		
Timeline (LOE Days)	Scope of Work	Deliverables
<b>Orientation</b> (3 days- US)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 days in U.S. to review background materials. Collect from the Mission and other sources comparative data and review all available data.</li> </ul>	
<b>Data Collection: Secondary Sources</b> Week 1 (6 days- DR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 day for AMEX Team to travel to DR.</li> <li>1 day for initial orientation meeting with USAID to consult with USAID and Implementing Partners.</li> <li>4 days to complete document review and develop detailed Evaluation Design (including instruments and interview list) and proposed Work Plan.</li> </ul>	1. Detailed <b>Evaluation Design</b> and proposed <b>Work Plan</b>
<b>Data Collection: Primary Sources</b> Week 2 & 3 (12 days- DR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>½ day to consult with USAID and collaborate in design of Evaluation Design and proposed Work Plan.</li> <li>10 days for primary data collection including in-depth interviews with beneficiaries, implementers, partners and USAID staff.</li> <li>½ day to finalize Summary of document review and Outline of Draft Evaluation Report.</li> <li>1 day to prepare for Mid-Term Briefing with USAID.</li> </ul>	2. <b>Summary of document review</b> and proposed <b>Outline of Draft Evaluation Report</b>
<b>Draft Reports</b> Week 4 (6 days- DR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 day to present Mid-Term Briefing to USAID and consult regarding key issues for evaluations.</li> <li>5 days to conduct data analysis and begin drafting evaluations.</li> </ul>	3. <b>Mid-term Briefing with USAID</b>
<b>Final Briefings</b> Week 5 (6 days- DR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 days to continue conducting data analysis and draft evaluations.</li> <li>1 day to prepare for Final Briefing.</li> <li>1 day to present Final Briefing to USAID and consult with USAID and project implementers on final drafts of evaluations.</li> <li>2 days for wrap-up (integration of USAID and implementers' feedback) and submission of Draft Evaluation Reports and Final Briefing.</li> </ul>	4. Draft of <b>Project Specific Evaluation Reports</b> (submitted to Implementers) 5. <b>Final Briefing</b>
<b>Mission Review</b> Week 6 & 7 (10 days- US)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 day for AMEX Team to travel to US.</li> </ul> <p><i>During Weeks 6 and 7 USAID reviews the Evaluation Reports and provides written comments.</i></p>	
<b>USAID Comments</b> Week 8 & 9 (6 days-US)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 days to revise draft Evaluation Reports and Power Points to address USAID's comments.</li> </ul> <p><i>Final Integrated Evaluation and Project Specific Reports will be submitted within two weeks of receiving USAID written comments on drafts.</i></p>	6. <b>Final Integrated Evaluation and Project Specific Reports</b>

**Data Collection: Secondary Data Sources**  
(Prep Week and Week 1-- U.S. and DR)

Orientation and Data Collection through Secondary Sources will take place during a three-day preparation period in the U.S. and Week One in the Dominican Republic. Upon contract signature, the Team Leader will work with the Mission to ensure that before traveling to the DR team members will review documents on the background of the three

programs as well as overall USAID economic development strategy. To begin document review, the team will review a report provided to USAID/DR on potential indicators to track the impact of Portman-Bingaman funding for rural development (from FY07-FY11) as well as any reporting and/or databases developed to track and report on those rural development indicators. Based on this initial review of indicators, the team will be able to critically review the use of these indicators in the monitoring and evaluation processes and reporting of the CAFTA-DR-IP, RED, and DRSTA programs.

The documents on the background of the three programs, as well as overall USAID economic development strategy will provide historical and contextual background. Review of implementer's documents should include any other relevant performance information sources, such as performance monitoring systems and/or previous evaluation or auditing reports. Document review should occur before meetings with implementer teams at their offices. After understanding each project, the team will be better able to have in-depth discussions with the implementing teams.

During Week One, the team will also meet with USAID for an Orientation Meeting to consult on the overall Work Plan and Evaluation Design. Additionally, the team will also work with the implementing teams to scope out timing for meetings and field work in order to finalize the Work Plan. At conclusion of Week One, the team will provide the following deliverable(s):

**1. Detailed Evaluation Design and proposed Work Plan**

**Data Collection: Primary Data Sources**

*(Weeks Two and Three-- DR)*

During Weeks Two and Three, the team will collect data from USAID staff, project implementers, partners, and beneficiaries based on the Evaluation Design noted above. At the conclusion of Week Three (perhaps the start of Week Four depending on availability), the team will have reviewed and collected a significant amount of primary and secondary data and will be prepared to present a Mid-term Briefing at the Mission to share initial progress and preliminary findings related to each project and overall preliminary findings regarding the project's contributions to SO1. Throughout this process, the Team Leader will collaborate with the Specialists to ensure insights are shared across projects, and begin to develop an outline for the Final Integrated Evaluation. The team will seek to include implementer representatives in this meeting as appropriate in order to facilitate coordination. Receiving implementer feedback early and often is essential to effective and accurate evaluations. At the conclusion of Week Three, the team will provide the following deliverable(s):

**2. Summary of Document Review and proposed outline of draft Evaluation Report (Conclusion of Week Two)**

### **3. Mid-Term Briefing (Conclusion of Week Three)**

#### **Draft Reports, Final Briefings and Final Drafts**

*(Weeks Four through Evaluation Close-DR and US)*

During Week Four, the team will draft the Project-Specific Evaluation Reports including tables, graphs, annexes, and executive summaries. At the conclusion of Week Four and the beginning of Week Five, the team will begin to share Project Specific Evaluation Report drafts with implementing partners and USAID, ensuring an accurate and useful evaluation.

Toward the end of Week Five, a Final Briefing will take place at USAID/DR. Team AMEX recommends a round table format for this Briefing and including implementer personnel as appropriate. The Briefing will be used to share program specific findings and explore synergisms and the overall implications for the Mission's SO-1. Following this meeting the AMEX Team will spend an additional two days in country incorporating USAID and implementer feedback into the draft reports. During Week Five, the team will provide the following deliverable(s):

#### **4. Draft Project Specific Evaluation Reports**

#### **5. Final Briefing**

During Weeks Six and Seven, USAID/DR will review the Project Specific Evaluation Reports and provide written comment. The team will receive USAID written comments on the Reports roughly ten days after the Final Briefing noted above. The team will spend approximately six days to incorporate this feedback into the final reports. Within two weeks of receiving Mission comments on the draft reports, the team will submit the Final Integrated Evaluation and Project Specific Reports. At the end of Week Nine, the team will provide the following deliverable:

#### **6. Final Integrated Evaluation and Project-Specific Reports**

### **C.4 KEY PERSONNEL**

In order to complete the proposed SOW, Team AMEX has assembled an evaluation team for the DR Tri-Project Evaluation to reflect both the technical expertise considerations outlined in the RFTOP and the country-specific expertise necessary to carry out this evaluation effectively. The Team will adhere to the following practices:

- Shared understanding of clients interests including background and context, stakeholders, purpose and proposed use of the evaluation results;
- Clarity among team members of the key questions, data sources, and potential methods for data gathering and analysis;
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of team members;
- Realistic schedule;

- Regular meetings and communication to ensure agreed upon deliverables; and
- Time management to ensure adequate field work and contingency plans in the event that weather /travel conditions or communications reduce the visits and data collection that can be made during the allotted time.

Team is comprised of the following four senior team members:

- Team Leader/Agribusiness and SME Specialist
- Trade Specialist
- Agribusiness Development Specialist
- SME Development Specialist

**F. 6 REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES OR OUTPUTS**

The Contractor shall submit reports, deliverables or outputs as further described below to the TOCOTR (referenced in Sections F.2 and G.2). All reports and other deliverables shall be in English language, unless otherwise specified by the COTR.

**Work plan:** Upon completion of background research, the team will provide a work plan that will include lists of primary research questions, planned interviewees, and a logistics plan.

**In-briefing and Out-briefing:** The team will give an introductory briefing at the start of field work that will include a discussion of the work plan to solicit USAID feedback. The team will give an exit briefing that will highlight an initial presentation of analytical findings and preliminary recommendations.

**Draft Final Report:** The team will prepare a detailed final report, describing its findings and recommendations. A draft of the report will be submitted approximately 15 days after completion of the field work.

**Final Report:** The final report will be submitted within five business days of receipt of comments from USAID.

[END OF SECTION F]

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Creating Clarity: Assessment, Analysis and Outreach for Cooperative Legal Reform *Principles for Legal Reform.*

## ANNEX C: CONTACTS

### Contact List by Organization

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Pérez, Jeffery	Abt Associates – Cluster Coordinator
de los Santos, Jesús	Abt Associates – COP USAID/RED
Baloum, Zahir	Abt Associates – Director Operations & Finances
Straub, Gordon	Abt Associates - Principal Associate
Aracena, Juan	Abt Associates - CCP History
Gil, Lissette	AED CDCT Director
Hendrickson, Meg	AED DSTA, Director
Hickman, Gary	CADEF - Green House Cluster Expert from US
Ledesma, Rafael	CADEF - Partners Farmer TA
González, Delio Antonio	CADEF - Member, Owner Agrimar packing house
Orlando	Calabasa Community Male project member.
Rosa	Calabasa Community Male project member.
Yanes, Patricia	Calabasa Community Woman's Club, Pres.
Soto, Wendy	Chemonics DR-CAFTA IP HO Project Manager
Batista, Lynette	Chemonics DR-CAFTA IP M&E
Arias, Alvin	Chemonics, DR-CAFTA IP, COP
Fadul, Haydeé	Consultant, GIS sensitive crops
Marta	DICOEX Regional Coordinator Santiago
Suarez, Denis	Directress, Environmental School Jarabacoa
El Español, Philipe	FedeCamera, Santiago
Eunice, Arq	Jarabacoa, Cluster Member bakery
Ramírez, Victor	Jarabacoa, Cluster Pres.Contractor
Katia	Jarabacoa, Municipality Civil Eng.
Anon	Jarabacoa, Municipality, Assit. Mayoriss
Anon	La Angostura, Community Project 3 males
Seligson, Mitch	La Angostura, Community Project 4 males
Ramírez, Pilar	LAPOP, Founder/Director
Silva, Eddy	REDDOM Foundation
de Jesus, Indira	TNC NEPAssist
Bermudez, Edith	TNC-EPP
Cirito, Luis	Tri-Project Consultant DSTA Evaluation
Vanegas, Manuel	Tri-Project Junior member RED Evaluation
Flick, Robert	Tri-Project Leader DSTA Evaluation
Ceballo, Josué	Tri-Project Leader RED Evaluation
Gonzalez, Luís	USAID/DR - ADMIN TRI-Evaluation Team Leader+A4
Greene, Duty	USAID/DR – COTR USAID/RED & DR-CAFTA IP
	USAID/DR – Director, Office of Economic Growth Economic Policy Advisor

Pérez, Odalís  
Molina, Claudia  
García, Conrado  
Scott-Vargas, Susan

USAID/DR - Mission Environmental Officer ATOR DSTA  
USAID/DR Acq. & Assist. Spec. Regional Contracts Office.  
USAID/DR Mission Economist Designed projects  
USAID/DR Regional Contracting Officer

**U.S. Agency for International Development**

1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, D.C. 20523

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)