



REGIONAL PROFILE



Improving production for export to select markets in Miami under the Caribbean Trade Expansion program (CTEP).

OVERVIEW

The countries of the Caribbean, commonly referred to as the “Third Border,” are of special interest to the United States. The geographical focus of The Office of the USAID Representative/Barbados is the English-speaking members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), in particular the six independent states of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). USAID’s presence in the region represents a resumption of assistance after a hiatus from 1996 to 1999. The current strategy focuses limited resources on the two most urgent challenges facing the region – the challenge to compete economically in open markets and controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS.



PROGRAMS

HIV/AIDS

The estimated adult HIV prevalence rate for the Caribbean is among the highest in the world. Given the economic and environmental vulnerabilities of the small island nations of the eastern Caribbean, the high degree of inter-island mobility, and social factors, activities to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic must be specifically tailored to meet unique country needs, while at the same time addressing HIV/AIDS as a regional problem. USAID’s assistance focuses on three areas: improving the quality of prevention, care, and treatment services; improving data collection; and reducing risky sexual behaviors. USAID is helping increase the effectiveness and quality of the broad continuum of HIV/AIDS related healthcare services through specialized training for healthcare providers and public health professionals. In order to develop and better target interventions to have the greatest impact, the region needs accurate and reliable data. USAID is supporting data collection programs and capacity building for monitoring and evaluation in several islands. Through these efforts, USAID partners have collected and analyzed critical data regarding the epidemic in individual islands and are presenting the findings to governments in the region and other stakeholders in order to determine next steps. USAID is also supporting targeted, comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention programs among most at-risk populations by working in collaboration with national HIV/AIDS programs and the wider civil society, including non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, peer-outreach workers, and informal networks.

EASTERN CARIBBEAN SNAPSHOT

USAID-assisted countries: Antigua & Barbuda, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

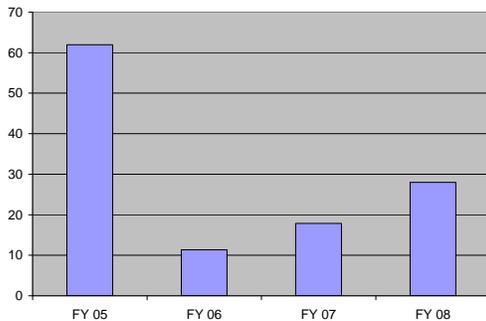


USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

EASTERN CARIBBEAN

REGIONAL PROFILE CONTINUED

USAID Assistance to the Eastern Caribbean Program
(Dollars in Millions)



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TRADE-ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

USAID seeks to strategically position the countries of the region to succeed economically in their new, open, and competitive trade environment. USAID activities are aimed more specifically at helping the region meet its requirement to participate in open trade regimes, reduce business constraints, and leverage market opportunities. Likewise, USAID seeks to strengthen the legal and environmental frameworks related to open trade and disaster risk reduction and the protection of its natural resources rich in biodiversity.

High priority has also been given to collaborating with government and civil society to target activities that support biodiversity conservation and policy, to identify and mitigate the impacts of human disturbance on ecosystems, and to improve the institutional framework for managing protected areas. USAID also works through a public-private alliance that leverages private sector resources to train selected farmers and exporters using sound market intelligence, agronomic and production technology packages, and integrated pest management systems for selected specialty crops for export to North America and regional markets.

EDUCATION

The Caribbean Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (C-CETT) program is an innovative response to the problem of illiteracy in several English-speaking Caribbean countries. A 2002 Presidential Initiative, the program is funded by USAID and offers training and follow-up support to teachers, with a view to making them better reading instructors. By improving the quality of education in the region and increasing children's reading capabilities, this program helps equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to participate fully in the competitive global economy.

Dominica is the site of a recent and significant expansion of the program as a result of the June 2007 U.S.-CARICOM conference at which the need for greater investment in education was noted. Dominica will now have support of the C-CETT project in 90 percent of its primary schools. Dominica joins other OECS countries St. Lucia, Grenada, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines as a partner in C-CETT.