



COUNTRY PROFILE



C. GARCIA • USAID/MEXICO

Through economic incentives and technical assistance to small farmers, the Conservation Coffee Alliance (between USAID, Conservation International and Starbucks Coffee Company) collaborates on biodiversity conservation, economic support for small-scale coffee farmers and sustainable production of high quality coffee in México and Latin America.

MEXICO SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 16 Sept 1810
Population: 103 million (2005)
GNI Per capita: \$7,310 (2005)

OVERVIEW

Mexico is a member of the North America Free Trade Agreement and shares a 2,000-mile border with the United States.



Mexico, the 14th largest economy of the world, and the second largest trading partner of the U.S., had \$11 billion in foreign direct investment, and received \$23 billion in remittances in 2006. Yet Mexico still faces huge gaps between rich and poor, and urban and rural. Over 45% of the country's population is poor (living on less than \$2 per day) while close to 18% is extremely poor (living on less than \$1 per day).

The overall goal of the USAID program in Mexico is to collaborate with Mexico on competitiveness and sustainable development, as well as on responses to shared U.S. – Mexico problems so that Mexico is able to grow its economy and create the economic activity needed.

In addition, lessons learned from joint U.S. – Mexico development activities have value that extend beyond Mexico's borders for south-south cooperation.

USAID/Mexico manages a \$28.9 million annual program of development cooperation in Mexico. For 2003-2008, USAID's program supports Mexican development and reform initiatives in the following key areas:

PROGRAMS

COMPETITIVENESS AND STRENGTHENED RULE OF LAW

USAID supports Mexican leaders seeking to improve competitiveness. Activities include increasing access of local governments to capital markets, government innovation programs, and improved public financial management.

USAID also provides technical assistance to support Mexican efforts to put in place more effective civil and criminal justice systems, increased access to justice through court-sponsored mediation centers, and increased professionalism by reforming legal education and professional standards.

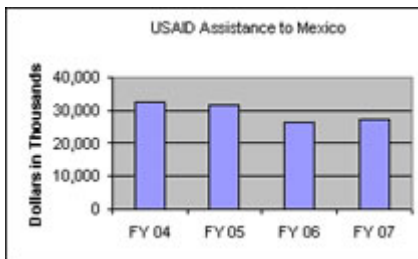
IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

USAID supports Mexican institutions' efforts to manage and conserve natural resources through the introduction of best practices that improve economic opportunities for areas with exceptional biodiversity. These include promotion of conservation coffee, certified timber products, and sustainable tourism, as well as other practices that protect the environment while increasing local economic benefits. In collaboration with Mexican public and private sector activities, USAID supports development of community based natural resource management plans in targeted watersheds, focusing on sustainable forestry and watershed management.



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

USAID PROGRAM ASSISTANCE TO MEXICO



Fire management and prevention, pollution reduction, energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy are integral components of the Mission's goal to improve natural resource management. Activities are applied in key watersheds in the poorest regions, as well as along the border region with the U.S. Recognizing the vital importance of water throughout Mexico, watershed management is used as an integrative theme to link local, state and federal partners. Activities are implemented through U.S. and Mexican NGOs and private contractors, in close collaboration with Government of Mexico agencies.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

USAID supports Mexican initiatives to improve responsiveness, prevention and control of infectious diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Activities in HIV/AIDS include promoting healthier behavior and positive policies, as well as combating stigma and discrimination associated with the disease. In tuberculosis, USAID cooperates with Mexico's Health Secretariat and its National Tuberculosis Control program to improve planning and modernize technologies for TB detection, diagnosis, and treatment.

BROADENING ACCESS TO FINANCE

The goal of USAID/Mexico's Micro and Rural Finance program is to contribute to economic growth, small business creation, and poverty reduction through the deepening of the Mexican financial sector. The program aims to overcome a major obstacle to economic growth—the lack of access to financial services needed by micro and small businesses, small agricultural producers, and the large majority of rural households. The program has a dual focus: (a) strengthening micro-finance institutions, including credit unions, and the services they offer; and (b) improving the enabling environment for rural financial market development. The program focuses on small producers, rural areas, and remittances, allowing for a close link to USAID/Mexico's overall goal of improving rural prosperity by better integrating small rural producers into growing markets.

HIGHER EDUCATION

USAID supports the Training, Internships, Exchanges and Scholarships (TIES) program which establishes partnerships between U.S. and Mexican higher education institutions to address development problems, such as access to microfinance, watershed management, and border health. Currently, there are 60 university partnerships that have led to improved workforce, trade capacity, and competitiveness in Mexico.

USAID also funds one and two-year technical training programs in the U.S. for disadvantaged rural, indigenous Mexican teachers and youth respectively. Teachers and youth return to their communities to implement skills gained and lead community projects.

To date, there have been over 975 scholarships provided through TIES.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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