



Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas



On October 5, 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton participated in the fourth Pathways to Prosperity Ministerial in the Dominican Republic. Pathways links Western Hemisphere countries committed to democracy and open markets in an initiative to promote inclusive growth, prosperity, and social justice.

Pathways countries currently include Belize, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and the United States. Brazil and Trinidad and Tobago have observer status. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are strategic Pathways partners.

Under Secretary for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs Jose Fernandez, Acting Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta Jacobson and Ambassador Carmen Lomellin, U.S. Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, accompanied the Secretary to the ministerial.

Partnering to Expand Opportunities

Pathways is a policy-level dialogue where countries recognize that economic growth has not always been equitably shared and that the promise of opportunity remains elusive for too many people. Pathways encourages policies and public-private partnerships aimed at empowering marginalized groups to participate in the global economy. Through shared leadership, Pathways partner countries are committed to deepening cooperation on the following four pillars:

1. Empowering small businesses by building an enabling environment for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises;
2. Facilitating trade by improving the systems, regulation, and infrastructure needed to trade more competitively;
3. Building a modern work force by emphasizing education, training, and entrepreneurship – key requirements for a modern workforce; and
4. Developing responsible and sustainable business practices through environmental practices, protections, and cooperation.

Pathways Activities

Pathways events highlight best practices to expand economic opportunities, encourage their effective implementation and advance the Ministerial Action Plan. Uruguay, as the chair country of Pillar III, recently hosted a Digital Opportunities Conference, with support from the United States government and ECLAC. The conference convened Pathways partners, technology experts, and civil society leaders from around the Americas to expand educational opportunities and build a modern workforce by promoting access to information and communication technologies.

Peru and the United States, co-chairs of Pillar IV, hosted workshops on the conservation of biodiversity, and on public participation in the management of protected areas. Honduras' Pillar I event, expected in January 2012, will focus on financial inclusion. As co-chairs of the trade facilitation pillar, Costa Rica and Chile are working on a customs-related event next year.

ECLAC, a key institutional partner, published a new book on Pathways best practices that illustrates how sound, evidence-based government policies and public-private partnerships contribute to building prosperity. The volume identifies country-level policies and projects, as well as regional programs, that the United States and its partners can build on under the Pathways initiative.

U.S. government agencies provide technical assistance in small business development, financial inclusion, infrastructure financing, women entrepreneurs, greening the supply chain, and improving environmental practices, including the following:

- The Millennium Challenge Corporation helped Honduras become a leader in secured transactions reform within Latin America and the Caribbean;
- In February 2011, the United States launched the Pathways Access Initiative (PAI) in Peru to help connect U.S. businesses with women-owned businesses (WOBs), and also promotes women's entrepreneurial development;
- The United States government anticipates contributing \$17.5 million in funds in Fiscal Year 2011 to promote economic growth throughout the region, including \$5 million over the next two years to a new, Inter-American Development Bank-managed "Crossroads" fund that supports infrastructure projects that foster regional integration;
- Treasury regional advisors will assist Central America finance improvements in trade-related infrastructure and promote greater financial inclusion; and
- The United States will also launch *Pathways to Cleaner Production*, which will create a network of universities, governments, and industries in Pathways countries.