

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY IN THE AMERICAS



“Pathways to Prosperity can and will help spread the benefits of economic engagement and trade to women, rural farmers and small businesses, Afro-descendants, indigenous communities, and others too often left on the sidelines of progress.”

— Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY IN THE AMERICAS 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.

PARTNERING TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES

Pathways is a policy-level dialogue where countries learn from one another's experience to spread the benefits of economic growth more broadly to all of our citizens. Pathways countries recognize that the gains from trade and economic growth have not always been equitably shared and that the promise of economic and social opportunity remains elusive for too many people in this hemisphere. Pathways seeks to close this gap by encouraging public policies and public-private partnerships aimed at empowering small farmers, small businesses, craftspeople, workers, women, indigenous communities, Afro-descendants, youth, and vulnerable groups to participate effectively in the global economy. Through shared leadership, Pathways partner countries are committed to deepening cooperation to:

- Empower small businesses by building an enabling environment for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises;
- Facilitate trade by improving the systems, regulation, and infrastructure needed for small firms to trade more competitively across borders;
- Build a modern workforce by emphasizing education, training, and focus on entrepreneurship – key requirements for a modern workforce; and
- Develop responsible and sustainable business practices by improving labor and environmental practices, protections, and cooperation.

PATHWAYS ACTIVITIES

Pathways events are designed to highlight best practices to expand economic opportunities and encourage their effective

implementation. Countries chairing Pathways pillars committees organize activities throughout the year that advance the Ministerial Action Plan. This past year, Costa Rica and Peru hosted workshops on public participation in environmental decision-making and on policies and mechanisms for the conservation of biodiversity in the context of trade and sustainable development. Using public-private partnerships, 10 Pathways countries established their own in-country women's entrepreneurship networks through a variety of projects following the U.S.-sponsored conference and mentoring network for women entrepreneurs (ACCESS) that began in October 2009.

U.S. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PATHWAYS

Various U.S. agencies provide technical assistance in Pathways priority areas such as small business development, financial inclusion, infrastructure financing, women entrepreneurs, greening the supply chain, and improving environmental practices. Examples include:

- Treasury regional advisors will be assisting Central America countries to finance improvements in trade-related infrastructure and to promote greater financial inclusion;
- 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,
- The United States will also launch a new initiative, Pathways to Cleaner Production, which will create a network of universities, governments, and industries in Pathways countries to promote environmentally-sound production processes.

PATHWAYS MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

The Pathways Foreign and Trade Ministers have met three times, in Panama in December 2008, in San Salvador in May 2009, and in Costa Rica in March 2010 to establish priorities and review progress under the initiative. The fourth ministerial is planned for October 2011 in the Dominican Republic.