



USAID Report to Congress on the Central America Youth Empowerment Program
Report #9
September 2024

The Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), 2022 (Div. K, P.L. 117-103) directed that \$50 million be made available for a program in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, referred to as the Central America Youth Empowerment Program (CAYEP). The goal of CAYEP is to create measurable reductions in migration from targeted communities in such countries by recruiting young people to engage in community projects, while having secondary impacts by channeling additional income into local economies and providing needed skills training for future employment in local businesses. Funds made available to support CAYEP should be matched with contributions from private donors and local governments.

This report is submitted pursuant to Section 7019(e) of the Fiscal Year 2022 SFOAA and the Fiscal Year 2022 Joint Explanatory Statement, which states:

“Not later than 90 days after enactment of the Act, and prior to the initial obligation of funds for the CAYEP...the USAID Administrator shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations a plan detailing the proposed uses of funds, which shall be updated every 90 days until such funds are expended.”

Since Vice President Harris announced the Central American Service Corps (CASC) at the Summit of the Americas in June 2022, USAID has continued to make significant progress on the design and implementation of the overall initiative.¹ Programming under this initiative offers youth in areas of high out-migration in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras opportunities to work in their own communities on local priorities such as educational support and tutoring, food security, green jobs, health education and services, violence prevention, climate impact strategies, and other civic engagement activities.

CASC/CAYEP programming is helping to address the drivers of irregular migration among those populations most likely to migrate by engaging youth in civic service opportunities, mentorships and internships, modest stipends, work and life skills acquisition, and enhancing young people’s sense of commitment to their communities.

Advances on CASC/CAYEP Program Design and Implementation

As of August 2024, USAID has procured nine of ten planned CASC/CAYEP awards. The award for the Regional Learning Platform, to be managed by the El Salvador and Central America & Mexico Regional Mission (ES-CAM) was finalized this quarter. The second ES-CAM activity is currently in design.

¹ As outlined in prior quarterly reports, this report differentiates between the CASC initiative (programs) and the CAYEP funding directive.

Implementation is underway for all bilateral activities. The updated chart below provides details on the obligated fiscal year (FY) 2022 amounts, the estimated number of beneficiaries through USAID-funded programs as part of this initiative, the number of awards, and the implementing partners. Activities range from, among others, helping high school students transition more smoothly to college or the workforce, technical and vocational training opportunities, to social entrepreneurship stipends that allow youth to grow their business and/or train for new lines of work. CASC program participants range in age from 15 to 29 years.

USAID CASC / CAYEP Programming in Central America as of April 2024

	FY 2022 USAID budget allocation	Estimated number of youth participants*	Number of USAID Awards	Implementing Partner(s)
USAID/ Guatemala	\$14 million	25,000	1	Glasswing
USAID/ Honduras	\$14 million	19,130	5	DAI, RTI, U.S. Forest Service, ACDI/VOCA
USAID/ El Salvador Bilateral	\$14 million	15,600	2	Glasswing DAI
USAID/ Central America & Mexico (CAM) Regional**	\$8 million	500	2	Environmental Incentives (MEL) TBD (Youth Conservation Corps)
TOTAL	\$50 million	60,230	10	6

* Revised estimates of youth participants (life of project) remain illustrative until work plans are finalized

** CAM regional budget includes Monitoring, Learning, and Evaluation platform.

Interagency Collaboration

Planning and implementation continues to benefit from the support of key U.S. government entities with experience and partnerships in the region, including the U.S. Peace Corps and the

Inter-American Foundation (IAF), as well as the U.S. Forest Service. Peace Corps is seeking a Peace Corps Response Volunteer to be placed with Glasswing in Guatemala. The IAF and Glasswing signed a memorandum of understanding in May to support CASC/CAYEP activities in the region.

Private Sector Collaboration

USAID signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Consejo Empresarial de America Latina (Latin American Business Council) in July. The MOU includes CASC as a potential point of collaboration. At the activity level, private sector alliances are being leveraged where possible to match USAID funding to implement and advance objectives.

Next Steps

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning platform for the CASC/CAYEP initiative will develop a regional learning agenda and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework. The relevant bilateral evaluations of CASC activities are underway. At the programmatic level, beneficiary targeting and recruitment, stipend calibration, and networking of service providers and youth continue in close coordination with the local public and private sectors, implementing partners, and the respective U.S. embassies.

Public Launches, Events, and Communications

A public launch is planned for October 2024 for the El Salvador CASC activity Raíces Centroamericanas (Central American Roots). The first cohort of 135 youth participants in this activity started in July. In August, the Honduras Mission recognized CASC program achievements as part of celebrating International Youth Day. The graduation of 300 Honduras CASC participants was also held in August. Since Guatemala's launch of CASC-Jóvenes con Propósito, the activity has engaged 1800 youth in service projects in education tutoring, after-school clubs, public health, among others reaching over 9,500 individuals. Strong collaboration with the Government of Guatemala continues, with the National Council of Youth (CONJUVE by its acronym in Spanish) citing CASC as one of its top accomplishments since the new Government of Guatemala Administration took office in January 2024. USAID has launched a public-facing CASC online platform housed under the ES-CAM Regional website.² It includes highlighted success stories, a map of the initiative's program, and will include reports for partners and beneficiaries.

² The CASC website can be found at <https://www.usaid.gov/central-america-and-mexico-regional-program>