

Congressional Budget Justification

FOREIGN OPERATIONS

Annex: Regional Perspectives



Fiscal Year 2014

Cuba

Foreign Assistance Program Overview

U.S. assistance will support civil society initiatives that promote democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly freedom of expression. Programs will provide humanitarian assistance to victims of political repression and their families, strengthen independent Cuban civil society, and promote the flow of uncensored information to, from, and within the island.

Request by Account and Fiscal Year

(\$ in thousands)	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 CR	FY 2014 Request	Increase / Decrease
TOTAL	20,000	*	15,000	-5,000
Economic Support Fund	20,000	*	15,000	-5,000

Economic Support Fund

Democracy Programs: Cuba remains one of the most politically repressed countries in the world. The Cuban government limits civil and political rights, such as the right to assemble, freedom of expression, as well as labor rights. It also refuses to recognize nongovernmental organizations and maintains a state monopoly over mass media.

The promotion of democratic principles and human rights remains the core goal of U.S. assistance, and there is an effort to manage programs more transparently, focus efforts on the island, and to widen the scope of the civic groups receiving support.

Key Interventions:

- U.S. assistance will work with independent elements of Cuban civil society to increase the capacity for community involvement, build networking among civil society organizations, and build the leadership skills of a future generation of civil society leaders.
- U.S.-funded programs will facilitate information sharing into and out of Cuba, as well as among civil society groups on the island, including through the use of new technology.
- U.S. assistance will support Cuban-led efforts to document human rights violations, and will provide humanitarian assistance to victims of political repression and their families.

Performance Information in the Budget and Planning Process

Program Monitoring and Evaluation Activities: The Cuba program included several program evaluations and assessments in FY 2012.

Conducting performance monitoring and evaluation on the Cuba program presents unique challenges. Traditional monitoring and evaluation mechanisms cannot be relied upon due to the difficulty associated with U.S. Government staff to travel to the island. Thus, the program works closely with implementing partners to ensure accurate and complete reporting of project activities; identify ways to consolidate information obtained from different sources about the services delivered by grantees and contractors; and to measure outputs and program impact through alternative means.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office concluded an extensive evaluation of the entire U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Cuba Program in January 2013. The evaluation contained zero recommendations for USAID, which is in stark contrast to the 2006 and 2008 reports which included eight recommendations.

In FY 2012, USAID and the Department of State worked closely with grantees and contractors to ensure performance management is incorporated in the program design and program implementation stages. During the lifetime of programs, implementing agencies work closely with implementing organizations to ensure outputs and outcomes are measured and on target to be achieved. Additionally, USAID and the Department of State conduct joint internal quarterly program reviews to discuss challenges and successes and ensure programs are on track to meet goals and objectives.

Use of Monitoring and Evaluation Results in Budget and Programmatic Choices: The Department of State and USAID worked jointly throughout FY 2012 to identify the most successful programming areas to date, as well as topics for future year programming most likely to achieve impact in Cuba. In particular, supporting freedom of information and enhanced communication among Cuban civil society actors have been identified as priority activities for current and future-year assistance funds.

Moving forward, the Cuba program will continue to include multiple implementing bureaus from the Department of State and USAID, which offer complementary strengths to ensure a well-managed program focused on outcome-based achievement.

Relating Past Performance to FY 2014 Plans: FY 2014 resources will be used to support activities that have demonstrated greatest success and impact. In response to increasingly vibrant and vocal civil society groups on the island, U.S. assistance would be used to support Cuba's nascent civil society while enhancing information sharing opportunities through the use of technology and new media.