

**Regional Partnership For
Decentralization and Local Governance
In the Americas**

**Quarterly Report XIX
April 1 – June 30, 2003**

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USAID Quarterly Report XVIII

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I. Introduction

The *Regional Partnership for Decentralization and Local Governance* will serve as a vehicle with which to implement the Summit of the Americas Plan of Action II, Strengthening Municipal and Regional Administrations. The *Partnership* will contribute to the LAC Regional Sustainable Development Office's Strategic Objective #5 (SO5): "Reinforcement of regional trends that deepen democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean." The *Partnership* will also contribute to LAC's Intermediate Result #2 (IR2): "Strengthened regional mechanisms to improve public sector legitimacy."

II. Major Accomplishments

Component 1: Donor Consultation

The international donor community will establish a Donor Consultative Group (DCG) for Decentralization and Local Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean. ICMA will serve as the DCG Executive Secretariat.

Activities and Accomplishments this Quarter:

Update of Forum Web site

During this quarter, the Secretariat updated and continued to add programs, projects, news articles and events to the site, and reviewed and added records to the library section. During the period of April 1 – June 30, 2003, the Forum Web site received an average of 480 visits per day.

A Regional Assessment of the State of Decentralization in Central America

ICMA has drafted a scope of work to update the report commissioned by USAID in 1995 entitled, "Municipal Development and Democracy in Central America" in order to provide USAID and other donors a perspective on the progress of decentralization in Central America since 1995, including the challenges faced by local and national governments and the role of associations in promoting change. By the end of the next quarter, it is expected that the scope of work will be finalized, consultants will be selected, and the first meeting of the group will be held.

Component 2: Information Exchange and Networking

ICMA will work with regional entities to establish sustainable mechanisms for the exchange of information and experience between and among regional organizations, municipal associations and local governments, and NGOs throughout the Americas.

Activities and Accomplishments this Quarter

Forum Newsletter

No issue-based newsletter was issued during this quarter. A newsletter focusing on municipal finance, highlighting regional initiatives, events, and publications related to this topics will be distributed during the next quarter.

E-learning Task Force Listserv

ICMA's consultant continues to work on the collection of relevant data on technology indicators in Latin America to help guide the group in making e-learning recommendations. The documents are available through the MSN Virtual Community.

Component 3: Local Government Training

ICMA will provide leadership in collaboration with U.S. and Latin American and Caribbean universities, regional and national associations, and municipal support NGOs in designing and implementing practical, affordable, needs-driven and results-oriented local government training programs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Activities and Accomplishments this Quarter

Bolivia Listserv Discussion

ICMA sent a consultant to Bolivia to interview representatives of donor agencies as well as representatives from the Bolivian government to garner their support for and participation in the Bolivia listserv discussion. As a result, there are 33 participants in the discussion, representing organizations such as the GTZ, DFID, AECI, IDB, SIDA, the World Bank, FAM Bolivia, and the Presidency of the Republic of Bolivia. All of the participants have received a copy of the case study document and will be participating in a moderated discussion to consolidate recommendations on inter-agency collaboration related to training and technical assistance for local government in Bolivia.

Meeting with INDESOL on Distance Education Practices in Mexico

On June 26, ICMA held a meeting with Maria Eugenia Gonzalez, Deputy Director of Social and Municipal Development of the Mexican Institute of Social Development (INDESOL) to discuss distance education practices funded by the Mexican federal government. The purpose of this meeting was to explore current practices in distance education and learn about INDESOL's best practices. This information can be used to support the policy recommendations made by the E-learning Task Force.

III. Projected Activities

Component 1: Donor Consultation

- Discussions will be held with the GTZ and FEMICA to finalize the scope of work of the Central American assessment. Consultants will be selected and the first meeting of the group will be held to develop an outline for the country reports.

Component 2: Information Exchange and Networking

- The Secretariat will continue to update and add records to the Programs, Newsroom, Calendar and Library sections of the Web site and will publish an E-newsletter on municipal finance.

Component 3: Local Government Training

- ICMA will continue to gather information for the development of the roadmap on e-learning. A draft roadmap will be available by the end of next Quarter.
- ICMA will discuss synergies between the GTZ Regional Program's knowledge management component and ICMA's research and initiatives in the area of e-learning.