



**CEPPS/IRI Quarterly Report:  
April to June, 2005**

**Peru: Promoting Political Stability by Improving Government Communications  
USAID Grant: DGC-A-00-01-00004-00**

**April 15, 2004 to June 30, 2005**

**Total Budget: \$200,000**

**Expenses to date: \$206,739.43<sup>1</sup>**

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**I. SUMMARY**

When Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo was elected in 2001, he inherited the difficult task of strengthening the country's democratic institutions following the resignation of former President Alberto Fujimori. President Toledo made many promises to promote economic growth and social development – promises that voters perceive as having remained unfulfilled. In fact, today most Peruvian citizens find that their standard of living has not improved and institutions still remain weak. Disillusioned with the president's leadership, voters have indicated through recent polls that they would prefer an authoritarian leader over a representative democracy if it meant greater economic prosperity and social stability. Although Peru has experienced notable levels of economic growth in the past two years, the Toledo administration has not been effective in communicating the progress achieved, and is often labeled as politically ineffective and lacking a clear, long-term strategy.

To address this issue, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) authorized IRI to deploy a specialized task force of political communications experts to Peru to: 1) assess the overall communications capacity of the government; 2) evaluate the government's communications strategy; and 3) provide strategic advice on message development and other communication tools. For two weeks in April of 2004, IRI

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<sup>1</sup> Corrections are being made to previous statements in order to balance the budget

conducted a thorough evaluation of the government's current communications strategy. IRI then presented its findings and recommendations to the President and his cabinet. At the conclusion of the presentation, the President expressed his satisfaction with IRI's work and announced his decision to proceed with the plan. To support the implementation phase of the communications plan, USAID authorized IRI to conduct continued consultations and training activities with the government.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

### Political Context

In the second quarter of 2005, the popular protests in Peru became more recurrent. Analysts explain that these protests are being initiated and used by local leaders to consolidate their space for the upcoming regional elections. Such protests targeted the following issues: better price of products (i.e., rice and potatoes); higher salaries for nurses; mining companies investing infrastructure in towns where they are located; opposition to free trade agreements (FTA) by agricultural and pharmaceutical sectors.

Furthermore, after a complicated and much criticized investigative process, Congress decided to send all the relevant information regarding the "signature fraud" case that involved President Toledo to the Fiscal General's Office, finally bringing a resolution to this matter.

Congress also discussed constitutional reforms to approve the re-institution of a two-chamber system but was not able to obtain the sufficient votes. Finally, although Congress was not able to elect the Ombudsman and a member to the Constitutional Court, it did approve changes on the electoral calendar. Indeed, Congress reached consent to move the electoral calendar closer to the election date. These are changes to the Political Party Law that was approved in November of 2003 which has not yet been tested during an electoral period. The changes seek to soften, and in some cases suppress, control mechanisms and limits contemplated in the law. This law still needs to be revised by the Executive branch.

Invited by the National Electoral Jury (JNE), twenty-one political parties signed the "Ethics Pact." The signatory parties agreed to develop non-aggressive campaigns and to make public information regarding their candidates. There is still uncertainty regarding the possible alliances that could take place. As of June, the electoral scenario already has 28 officially registered parties, with six other parties in line.

Fujimori has maintained an aggressive presence in the media throughout this time. He first nominated his attorneys to represent him in the judicial accusations for several pending allegations of corruption, violation of human rights and misconduct as President. In May, his followers in Lima announced that they will work intensely to register Fujimori as a candidate for next Presidential elections. To intensify his campaign, Fujimori appeared on the national TV station, occupying a five-minute air time to which his party is entitled by law. The national regulatory committees explained that there was

it was not possible to prevent this from happening, since Fujimori's party, Si Cumple, has met all its legal requirements. Nevertheless, Fujimori is prohibited from running for an elected position and holding office for 10 years.

### III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In this quarter, IRI consultants and the members of the Communication Group (CG) of the Presidency continued to hold meetings. At the beginning of the period, members of the CG expressed their concerns regarding the following issues:

- The over-exposure of the President in the media.
- The quality of the President's events. Some CG members felt that the events were poorly planned and executed;
- The President's unprepared remarks.

A special meeting was organized between the CG, the Secretary General of the Palace, members of the Agenda Planning Group, and IRI consultants to (1) reduce the number of public speeches made by the President to one per day; (2) plan the events more carefully; and (3) prepare remarks for the President for each event.

The meeting was led by Juan de la Puente and Secretariat General Roncagliolo. Both parties agreed to meet together once a week to compare notes on past, present, and future events. Mr. de la Puente asked for more notice, a minimum of 48 hours, for preparation of Presidential speeches. Additionally, both parties indicated that final decisions on handling of the press, content of daily schedules, and content of TV commercials, would be pending presidential approval. IRI consultant Ralph Murphine noted that this remains a weak communication management approach and agreed to bring the matter up with the President.

The CG continued to meet sporadically with the President during this period. IRI consultants recommended the team to continue to meet daily.

The most important issues discussed among the CG and IRI consultants during this quarter are the following:

- **CLOSING THEME FOR THE ADMINISTRATION:** CG members suggested that the administration should focus on a closing theme for the last 15 months of the administration. The idea suggested was *reconciliation*, in an attempt to avoid electoral entanglements and to close on a "high note." The President responded with some enthusiasm to this idea. The CG will work on further developing this idea within the existing communications plan.
- **SIGNATURES:** The Congressional Committee will soon submit the report on the signature fraud controversy. The CG suggested working on a strategy opposing the committee's findings which are presumed to be found in opposition to the

administration's stance. It was agreed that members of the CG will meet to further discuss a strategy to address this issue.

- **REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE CG:** It was agreed that the CG will meet each day in the office of Juan de la Puente at 11:00 AM. This meeting would take place regardless of the meetings with the President.
- **RADIO ADDRESS PROGRAM:** IRI consultants and CG suggested the implementation of a series of 3-5 minute radio address for distribution each week. The President agreed. Members of the CG will work on the format and the material to begin recording April 15. Once the President's program airs, the Prime Minister offered to record his own radio programs weekly.
- **SOCIAL PROGRAM COMMUNICATION PLANNING.** The Prime Minister called the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Education to set up a meeting for IRI consultant Ralph Murphine, Manuel Echegaray, Deputy Director of Communications, and Rudy Vega, Technical Secretary of the Commission on Social Programs for the Council of Ministers. At these meetings, participants reviewed social programs underway and planned to obtain sufficient information to allow for the drafting of a communications plan and calendar which would be presented to the CG and President in a timely manner.

## **April**

In working meetings with Mr. Murphine, Rudy Vega presented a 200 page summary of all government on-going programs, totaling to almost 200. A copy of this document was given to Mr. Echegaray for use within the CG. After reviewing the information, the CG reached a general agreement that the social program communication strategy should be narrowed to no more than 5-6 areas. The group discussed many issues, and came up with an outline (Annex 1).

Mr. Murphine and Mr. Echegaray also initiated meetings with the Ministries of Transportation and Education to establish a communication strategy among them. These meetings were followed-up by Mr. Echegaray.

Late in April, IRI informed the Palace General Secretary about the upcoming conclusion of IRI's program, and requested a final meeting with the President.

## **May**

In the month of May, IRI's consultants continued to work with the CG. Greater focus was placed on the team ability to continue implementing the strategy designed together with the consultants. Further meetings were held with some of the CG members and the communication teams of the Ministry of Education, Transportation, Communication, and Housing.

## **June**

At the beginning of the month, President Toledo made a 15-day trip to Asia. Various members of the CG were part of the official delegation. There were no meetings in June, with the exception of the end-of-the-program meeting requested by IRI on June 21st.

In this final meeting IRI's Director for Latin America & the Caribbean, Brian Dean, recognized the President's commitment to the program and expressed appreciation for the support provided to the consultants and their work.

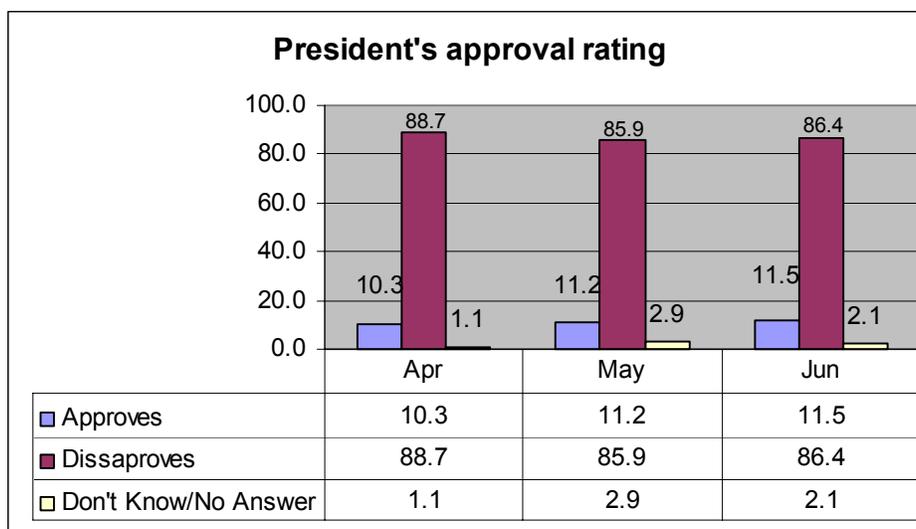
In a private meeting with IRI's delegation, President Toledo expressed interest in extending the program through the end of his administration. IRI responded that this was a one-year program and that the funding agency had committed funds only for the period ending on June 30, 2005. However, IRI did offer to convey President Toledo's request to the US Embassy and the US Agency for International Development. President Toledo appreciated the effort and noted that he will await a response on his request to keep IRI engaged in this project.

IRI spoke with USAID's Democracy Director and the US Embassy's Political Officer who noted that President Toledo should be informed that there were no further funds available for this program. IRI informed the President but also noted that the consultants were open to continue directly working with his communications team.

## **IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

*Result 1: Government ministries and the office of the president implement communications strategies that are effective, transparently-developed, responsive to citizen needs and concerns, and issue-oriented.*

According to the June poll conducted by the University of Lima's *Grupo de Opinion*, President Toledo's approval rate remains at the 11%. (This poll only covers the city of Lima).



*Grupo de Opinion, University of Lima*

Additional information that should be taken into consideration is the results presented by a July poll conducted by *Apoyo Opinion y Mercado*. The poll lists the issues identified by citizens as the more positive results of Toledo's administration. The following are the issues raised:

- Beginning of gas extraction at Camisea 48%
- Beginning of Inter-oceanic highway 40%
- Housing programs 35%
- Promotion of tourism 25%
- Increase of exports 18%
- Economic management and stability 13%
- Continuing FTA negotiations 12%

Furthermore, during this quarter, the consultants prepared the government's communications team to continue working on the strategy proposed at the beginning. As a result, the CG initiated meetings of coordination with the Palace Secretariat, and meetings with other ministries.

*Result 2: Media reporting of government activity as well as relevant political developments becomes more professional and impartial.*

There are no results to report at this time.

## V. EVALUATION

To summarize the conclusions drawn by the consultants, IRI will cite Mr. Murphine's evaluation of the program. Mr. Murphine rates the President's determination to follow their recommendations as moderate, and the determination of the staff as relatively

strong. Furthermore, Mr. Murphine noted that various issues raised with the communications team remain unresolved.

He identifies the following unresolved problems as the following:

1. Inadequate communication habits by the President:

- a. Speaking too long and *ad-libbing*;
- b. Making promises that are difficult to keep;
- c. Refusing to ask for better communication by Ministers;
- e. Relying on a weak communications' organizational structure;
- f. Relying on advisors that are not skilled in this area;
- g. Micromanaging in communication issues.

2. Lack of creativity and use of alternative spokespersons. Almost all communication comes from the President and the Prime Minister. Not enough and not good enough.

3. Weak financial support for a good mass media communications program. The time bought is not enough to force through the high volume of adverse publicity generated by mass media on a daily basis.

As noted a year ago, these are all problems that can be resolved with the President's willingness to do so.

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

Project ended in June 30, 2005. A final report will be submitted in the month of September.

Consultants Time in Lima  
April – June, 2005

APRIL						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Code	Name	# of days
	Roberto Izurieta	-
	Ralph Murphine	13
	Both Consultants in Lima	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>

MAY						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Code	Name	# of days
	Roberto Izurieta	-
	Ralph Murphine	9
	Both Consultants in Lima	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>

JUNE						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Code	Name	# of days
	Roberto Izurieta	-
	Ralph Murphine	-
	Both Consultants in Lima	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>

## Annex 1

### SOCIAL PROGRAM COMMUNICATION PLAN

#### PROPOSED DRAFT

ISSUE	AGENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agreement of plan</li><li>• Assign responsible person</li></ul>	Ministry of Health
Highways	Mint. Of Transport and Communication
Huascarán	Ministry of Education
Social Infrastructure in rural areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water</li><li>• Drainage</li><li>• Roads</li><li>• Schools</li><li>• Electricity</li><li>• Phone</li><li>• More....</li></ul>	Ministry of Housing
Food: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mi Cocina</li><li>• Mi Pescado</li><li>• Popular dinners</li><li>• Milk glass</li><li>• Nutrition</li><li>• More ....</li></ul>	Ministry of Women and Social Development
Decentralization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Autonomy</li><li>• Better services</li><li>• Ministerial Council</li></ul>	Decentralization Commission

*Presidency needs to complete, approve and endorse this plan.*