

# **AMAZON CONSERVATION TEAM (ACT) – COLOMBIA PROGRAM**

**Final Report  
October 29, 2002 – October 28, 2005**

## **Sustainable Development for Colombian Indigenous Communities**

**Funding provided by the  
United States Agency for International Development  
Cooperative Agreement 514-A-00-03-00201-00**

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## SUMMARY

The agreement supports a multifaceted endeavor that revolves around the partnership between ACT and five indigenous groups in the Colombian Amazonian Piedmont. The project reflects ACT's and its indigenous partners' belief that development, conservation, cultural recovery, and health are indivisible.

In summary, over three years, USAID supported the commencement of a process of organizational, land use, and cultural recovery for the Ingaño indigenous communities of the Tandachiridu Inganokuna Association in the Piedmont of the Caquetá. This effort enabled the organization to transform itself during the course of the project, an example to be followed by the leaders of the other groups that inhabit the Amazon Piedmont and by seven communities of the Yapú region of the department of Vaupés.

The project enabled an extensive communicative and participatory process, embracing both intra-ethnic conflict resolution and sociocultural strengthening, which culminated in the legally recognized organization of four associations of authorities of four indigenous communities, as well as support for the determination of their strategies and plans. These communities were the Siona, Coreguaje, Ingaño of the Bota Caucana, and a portion of the Eastern Tukano of the Vaupés.

Progress toward the strengthening of these organizations has generated conditions such that the autonomous governing bodies have won the respect of their communities and have established models of land management directed at alternative development that have provided the beneficiary families with the opportunity to advance licit economic activities. The models help prevent the appearance of illicit cultivations on indigenous lands and the incorporation of indigenous people in the armed groups that operate on the margins of the law.

In addition, a pioneer program for the provision of health services to indigenous communities was established, supported by traditional knowledge-keepers united among ethnically diverse communities; new methodologies were presented for the declaration of the first *in situ* germplasm conservation area in Latin America; contributions were made to the prevention of illicit cultivations; and the project engaged in the collaborative process to establish a regional peace process.

## COVERAGE

16 municipalities in four departments benefited during the project's execution.

Caquetá	San José de la Fragua
	Belén de los Andaquíes
	Solano
	Solita
	Milan
Cauca	Piamonte
Putumayo	Puerto Asís
	Puerto Leguízamo

	San Miguel
	Valle del Guamués
	Orito
	Mocoa
	Sibundoy
	Colón
	Villa Garzón
Vaupés	Mitú

## CUMULATIVE INDICATORS

Indicator	Cumulative Results	Goal Years 1-3	Success Rate (%)
Families benefiting	3,785	1,559	243
Hectares of licit crops supported	54,747	68,097	80
Infrastructure projects completed	26	22	118
# of workdays created	33,188	35,638	93
NGO/associations/grantees implementing AID activities that are strengthened	100	100	100
Global Amazon Indigenous Institutional Strengthening Index	0.60	0.61	98
# of species recovered for community use	205	182	113
Percent of beneficiary families receiving direct traditional medicine services	76	50	152
# of individuals receiving capacity building	863	480	180

## SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

Below are highlighted the major project results during the three years of execution:

- The support enabled the legal establishment of four associations of indigenous authority, from a goal of three. The associations were those for the Siona, Coreguaje, and Ingano communities of the Bota Caucana and a portion of the eastern Tukano group of the Vaupés.
- 3,785 families were project beneficiaries; of those, 352 were directly involved in licit sustainable production development activities, covering an area of 121 hectares and recovering approximately 88 subsistence resources and 117 medicinal plants.
- The project made possible the generation of 33,188 workdays.
- 54,741 hectares of natural ecosystems were protected, and the co-management processes of a national biocultural park with the Ministry of Environment and five indigenous reserves were strengthened.
- Support was provided to maintain an ethnoeducation program dedicated to the preservation and advancement of traditional culture, for which 41 students were sponsored.
- Support was provided for the overall communication needs of the indigenous communities. Two indigenous stations, Ingakuna Stereo and Coreguaje Stereo, are transmitting 48 and 45 hours/week, respectively.

- Four indigenous communities have been equipped with telecommunication systems (Sionas, Inganos, Coreguajes and Tatuyos).
- This first phase also saw the establishment of a pioneer program for the provision of health services to indigenous communities through the training of ten Community Health Promoters, trained with academic support under an agreement with the Universidad del Rosario, Faculty of Medicine.
- Innovative methodologies were applied toward the declaration of the first *in situ* conservation area for medicinal germplasm in Latin America. ACT made great progress with the fulfillment of commitments through an inter-institutional agreement between the National Parks Unit, the Universidad del Rosario, and ACT.
- Over the past three years, ACT trained 32 promoters from five indigenous groups in different specialties: ancestral agriculture; health services; radio broadcasting; and traditional land management and organization. In addition, eight instructors of the Tandachiridu Inganokuna Association's Yachaicurí School were trained under an institutional pedagogical project dedicated to ethnoeducation.
- Assistance was provided for 36 traditional healers; stipends were granted to 48 apprentices; 72 medicinal plant gardens were installed; 45 indigenous health brigades were covered with a total of 136 sessions (4,728 participants).
- A Gathering of Indigenous Women of Traditional Medicine was held, with 36 women from seven ethnic groups attending.
- In June 2005, USAID approved an award to the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), which contains a proposal by ACT with assistance to communities settled in the area of influence of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park. This means there is an opportunity to generate interdependencies and synergies in the execution of both projects, guaranteeing the continuity of the processes underway with six indigenous organizations that are in different stages and have diverse foci.
- Additional ACT funding permitted the acquisition of 38 hectares in Mocoa, Putumayo and in Yurayaco, Caquetá.

## **RESULTS BY COMPONENT**

### **I. Strengthen food security.**

With USAID support, ACT expanded the subsistence capacity of the focus communities, such that 352 indigenous families were directly involved in licit sustainable production development activities, covering an area of 121 hectares and recovering approximately 88 subsistence resources.

#### Land acquisition for sustainable agriculture

- ACT facilitated the acquisition of 1) a 13-hectare parcel on which was constructed the women's program headquarters in Mocoa, Putumayo, and 2) a 25-hectare parcel for traditional sustainable production in Yurayaco, Caquetá.
- Experimental plots allowed the continued exploration of new means to increase output despite a limited amount of available land. The developed techniques were promoted in the communities through ongoing capacity building for 205 indigenous representatives.

- The results are reflected in the food production for the support of the Yachaicurí school's students, in the reduction of production costs related to animal feed, and in the replacement of 100% of synthetic fertilizers by organic fertilizers produced on the farm.
- The farm contributed to the school's food requirements at an equivalent value to US\$222, which translates to 16% of the students' maintenance costs at the boarding school.

#### Native seeds exchange

- 70 families in indigenous communities participated in 1,100 seed and seedling exchanges, restoring 88 native food species that were identified as very scarce or locally extinct.
- USAID support was focused on 17 Ingano communities in Caquetá and the southeast corner of the department of Cauca and then expanded to other groups involving up to 150 families, including Kamsá, Siona, and Coreguaje families.
- A team of 16 agroecological promoters was trained. The team completed evaluations of the sustainable production conditions of 17 Ingano communities and commenced evaluations of the Siona, Coreguaje and Eastern Tukano communities of the departments of Caquetá, Putumayo and Vaupés respectively. 75 meetings were held for the transmission of production techniques to families of the indigenous communities.

<b>Development of Agroecological Farm – Yachaicurí School (Yurayaco-Caquetá) October 2002 – October 2005</b>			
<b>Verifiable Indicators</b>	<b>October 2002</b>	<b>October 2005</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Total available area (ha.)	1	25	In 2002, the Association made use of 1 hectare of land. ACT supported the acquisition of 25 additional has.
Area of <i>chagra</i> (ha.)	0.25	2	In a small productive <i>chagra</i> area, productivity was successfully increased through sustainable agroforestry systems.
# species cultivated	14	27	There was an increase of about 100% of the number of species on the farm.
# trees produced in the nursery	2,362	10,000	The nursery supplied the farm and the communities belonging to the Association with a diversity of species of different use.
Value of output (average monthly US\$)	0	118	Production of eggs (average 17/day), fish (average of 420 lbs/year) and vegetable garden products (average US\$9/month). Market value.
# promoters trained	3	17	8 promoters of the Ingano Association of Caquetá and 9 promoters of other ethnic groups.

Production of liquid fertilizers (average monthly liters)	0	37	Average production for use on the farm and replacement of 100% of chemical fertilizers.
Production of solid fertilizers (average monthly kg)	0	205	Information on monthly production of solid fertilizers, represented in compost and humus, which are used to improve the fertility conditions of the soils.
# workshops conducted	15	75	Workshops conducted over 3 years (25 workshops per year).
# participants	75	205	Refers to the # of indigenous persons who participated in the workshops and who continued in a process of ongoing capacity building.
# seed exchanges conducted	46	1,100	Presents the total # of exchanges conducted over 3 years.

## II. Strengthen governance and land management capabilities of indigenous communities.

The progress in a continuing strategy of strengthening the Tandachiridu Inganokuna indigenous organization has become an inspiration and example to other indigenous communities interested in protecting their culture and environment and in avoiding the coca trade. The provided support enabled the legal arrangement of associations for the Siona, Coreguaje, and Ingano communities of the Bota Caucana and a portion of the eastern Tukano group of the Vaupés, including the determination of their “Life Plans”<sup>1</sup> and strategies.

The Tandachiridu Inganokuna Association concludes three years of the project with a group of 32 Inganos leaders committed full-time to the coordination of the components of the Life Plan. It is the responsibility of the Association to ensure the sustainability of the project and to exercise the principles of autonomy, participation, development, identity and traditional land rights.

Additionally, the autonomy of the indigenous groups was strengthened through self-managed indigenous communication and ethnoeducational systems. In particular, with the support of USAID, ACT’s ethnoeducation program succeeded in maintaining the continuity of an indigenous school that respects traditional culture at the same time that it provides instruction in the necessities for living in the modern Western world. This school has become a fundamental tool in training new leaders that ensures a generational transition that is a guarantee of sustainability of the impacts generated by the project in both the medium and long term.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the name that the indigenous communities have given to their development plans, which includes their future projects or expectations.

### Support for radio stations

- USAID funds supported the training of nine radio promoters as well as the purchase of broadcast materials, and paid for utilities and other administrative costs.
- Thanks to the support of USAID, Two indigenous radio stations established with ACT's assistance continued transmission in both Spanish and the local indigenous language (Ingano out of the Yurayaco station, and Coreguaje out of the Orteguaza station). This support fulfilled the overall communication needs of the isolated indigenous communities. The broadcasting of the two indigenous stations reached 48 and 45 hours/week, respectively.
- An additional result was the equipping of four indigenous communities with telecommunication systems (Sionas, Inganos, Coreguajes and Tatuyos).

### Ethnoeducation school

- The Ingano Yachaicurí School in Yurayaco obtained official recognition for its operation by the Caquetá Secretary of Education through Resolution #000514 of November 7, 2003.
- Support was provided to maintain an ethnoeducation program dedicated to the preservation and advancement of traditional culture, through which 41 students were sponsored.
- The educational program of the school included courses for the recovery of the Ingano language and instruction in the culture, handicrafts and traditions of their community.
- The Yachaicurí school is currently housed in installations built by ACT and Tandachiridu Inganokuna, and has been upgraded with funds from USAID and ACT (science laboratory, communications center, darkroom, teacher's room, bathrooms and kitchen).
- ACT's ethnoeducation program was named an innovative educational model by the Caquetá Secretary of Education, and ACT was invited to present the project to representatives of the Ministry of Education in Bogotá; the central office in Yurayaco was also visited by a representative from the Ministry in 2004.
- A school herbarium containing endangered medicinal plants was established.
- In September 2004, the Yachaicurí School was singled out by the Ministry of Education from a pool of 40 national educational experiences.  
<http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co>

### Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park management

- ACT support, through the implementation of the project, has strengthened the Tandachiridu Inganokuna Association's ability to participate in the process of coordination of the management of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park. This process is an innovative model at the international level, and has received recognition in settings such as the 5th World Congress on Protected Areas and National Parks in Durban, South Africa.

- To ensure the success of this model, ACT helped Tandachiridu Inganokuna recruit, train, and remunerate 20 indigenous land managers to protect the Indi Wasi Park and reserves. This team includes a traditional healer and was coordinated by an indigenous woman.
- ACT assisted in attaining formal agreements between the Colombian National Parks Service and the Ingado representatives of Tandachiridu Inganokuna for the joint administration of the Indi Wasi Park. Forty-five members of Tandachiridu Inganokuna met from February 24-28, 2003 with representatives of the National Park Service and representatives of the Global Environmental Facility to appoint an executive committee for the inter-administrative agreement for the coordination of the public function of the conservation and management of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park.
- A document was published that summarizes the history of the land management process of the Indi Wasi Park, with the support of the United Nations University for Peace.
- The creation and training of a land management team enabled the completion of environmental diagnostics of the area within and around the Park (four expeditions of biological and cultural characterization).
- Drafting of a technical document containing a multitemporal analysis based on satellite images regarding the status of the threats to the biological diversity of the Indi Wasi Park and the Ingado indigenous traditional lands. Realized with the support of the National University of Colombia.
- ACT signed and executed three contracts with the Parks Unit of the Colombian Ministry of the Environment and the National Parks Agency of Spain for the production of 1) a biological inventory report for a region of the park bordering the Cueva de los Guácharos National Park; 2) a DVD of the vision of the indigenous people for their traditional lands; and 3) a baseline diagnosis of the management plan for the *Indi Wasi* Park.
- ACT supported the construction of six monitoring posts constructed around the Indi Wasi Park. The pressure of the armed groups forced the abandonment of two of these posts.

#### Organizational and travel costs

- USAID support helped ensure the mobility of isolated indigenous groups in areas where displacement implied very high costs. This enabled the strong participation of indigenous representatives in decision-making process with significant results in terms of the strengthening of their organization for the exercise of democratic governance.
- Thanks to the support for workshops, meetings and capacity building sessions, 3,785 families actively participated in decision-making processes or in the transmission of knowledge.

#### Legal incorporation and support for similar legalization processes among the Coreguaje, Siona, and Kamtzá

- USAID funding supported the process of legalization of three additional indigenous associations. The process involved several stages, beginning with ensuring that legalization was a viable and desirable option (site visits and meetings to present the

concept of legally-recognized unity). An assessment was carried out through a population census and a survey of the areas of the indigenous reserves, and a general meeting was held with all the communities in order to reach formal agreement on the concept of a union and to establish the Association. The bureaucratic process ensued, involving the Indigenous Affairs Office of the Interior Ministry, which made a favorable referral to the Minister of the Interior who ratified the four Associations.

- The support enabled the legal arrangement of four associations of indigenous authority: Siona, Coreguaje, and Inga communities of the Bota Cauca, as well as a portion of the eastern Tukano group of the Vaupés.

Indigenous Group	Association	Resolution/date
Siona	Asociación de Cabildos indígenas del pueblo Siona.	No. 11 January 31, 2003
Eastern Tukanos	Asociación de Autoridades Tradicionales Indígenas de la Zona de Yapú	No. 6 January 26, 2005
Coreguajes	Consejo Regional Indígena del Orteguzza Medio Caquetá	No. 26 May 25, 2005
Inganos of the Cauca	Asociación Nukanchipa Atunkunapa Alpa	No. 31 June 3, 2005

- The forming of the associations helped the indigenous communities succeed in effective exercise of their fundamental rights: land use, development, participation, identity and autonomy. A prominent example of this exercise is the coordination of the management of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park between the government of Colombia and the Tandachiridu Ingaokuna Association.
- On August 10, 2005, ACT and the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana signed an agreement for inter-institutional cooperation for the joint development of training and capacity building programs. Workshops on indigenous legislation were conducted in Mocoa, which included the attendance of 16 indigenous leaders of the Coreguaje, Siona, Inga and Kamzá ethnic groups.

#### Securing the Nukanchipa Alpa indigenous reserve

- In late November 2002, ACT met with members of eleven communities of the Bota Cauca as well as national and local entities, which led to formal agreements with the Colombian Government to begin the process to protect this land in a manner that incorporates the local communities.
- The social conditions of the indigenous community in Mocoa occasioned an internal conflict that impeded progress in the scheduled land management activities. However, ACT, with foundation funds, contracted the legal assistance of an indigenous attorney and supported three general meetings for conflict resolution within the Inga Kamzá community of Mocoa. This effort culminated favorably with legal proceedings to reestablish local authority through the naming of a new governor and resumption of the process of management of their traditional lands.

### III. Safeguard indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants

The knowledge of traditional healers of ACT's target communities was preserved, transmitted to new generations, and made accessible to their communities. Economic assistance was provided for 36 traditional healers; stipends were granted to 48 apprentices, 72 medicinal plant gardens were installed, and 45 indigenous health brigades with 136 sessions were conducted (4,728 participants).

A significant result beyond the fulfillment of the original project proposals was the emergence of two new unions of traditional knowledge-keepers, inspired by and associated with the Union of Traditional Healers of the Colombian Amazon (UMIYAC). The first was an assembly of the women of traditional medicine of the Colombian Amazon Piedmont, with the aim of protecting and recognizing the role of indigenous women in traditional healthcare systems. The second was a gathering of 40 payés<sup>2</sup> that, in addition to preserving their knowledge regarding the health management of their communities, contributed actively to the exercise of the authority of their Association's political leaders.

At the conclusion of the three years of the project, 55 traditional healers and 25 political authorities assembled in a General Meeting, and concluded that in order to guide project management and prevent the cultural uprooting of their communities, it would be necessary to coordinate decision-making with the unions of traditional knowledge-keepers (UMIYAC and Kumua Yoamará) and the organizing structures of their communities. Additionally, it would be necessary to contribute to the transmission of knowledge to the new generations, especially through supporting apprentices of these traditional knowledge systems.

#### Healers' food security

- The project enabled direct support to the food security of 36 traditional healers and indirect support to 19 additional healers for a total of 55 healers conducting health promotion activities in the communities, including knowledge transmission activities conducted by UMIYAC.

#### Healers' support committee

- Private resources provided by ACT enabled continuity of support to a committee consisting of three traditional healers, whose responsibility has been to ensure an internal discussion between knowledge-keepers and the building of consensus regarding strategies for promoting traditional medicine at the national and international level, as well as means to alleviate the negative impacts of charlatany.

#### Scholarships for apprentices

- USAID support over the first three project years permitted scholarships for 48 apprentices, from a goal of 37.
- Efforts over three years to evaluate the health of the communities identified their poor sanitary condition, the loss of the use of medicinal plants and traditional medicine, and loss of recognition of the medical leaders by the communities. In response, with USAID support, a team of 10 community promoters was trained. The promoters have initiated their fieldwork, which emphasizes the drafting of evaluations of the health situation of their communities; the promotion of activities that assist in the recovery of plants, ethnomedicinal knowledge and traditional medical practices; and the identification of medical leaders.
- The scheduling for the promoters included presentation meetings before traditional authorities and communities; drafting of community health survey forms for evaluation;

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<sup>2</sup> Shamans of the culture of the Yuruparí in the Vaupés.

construction of medicinal gardens; identification of species for health self-maintenance; identification of medical leaders; and drafting of reports.

#### Health brigades

- Private support obtained by ACT enabled the realization of 45 indigenous health brigades with 136 sessions conducted (4,728 participants). This result permitted an expansion of the availability of self-managed mechanisms and systems for the indigenous communities to assist in health services for communities living in conditions of isolation.

#### Medicinal plants gardens

- 72 gardens of medicinal plants were planted.
- The support provided enabled the recovery of 117 of species of medicinal use.
- Five maloca gardens intended for the practice and learning of traditional medicine were installed. In the Vaupés, two maloca gardens were also constructed with ACT resources.

#### Special healers area support

- Innovative methodologies were applied toward the declaration of the first *in situ* conservation area for medicinal germplasm in Latin America. ACT made great progress with the fulfillment of commitments through the inter-institutional agreement between the Colombian National Parks Unit, the Universidad del Rosario and ACT.
- An UMIYAC land management committee consisting of 12 traditional healers was formed. This committee has been responsible for incorporating traditional knowledge in the conducted surveys in order to justify the declaration of a special protected area.
- A monitoring post was installed with ACT resources, to be maintained by the park guard families charged with the protection and management of the area. Moreover, regarding progress in the process of recognition of the area on the part of the authorities of the government of Colombia, the presence of this family has enabled the maintenance of ongoing monitoring in the area to protect their biodiversity from the advance of cultivation of illicit crops.
- Two biological and cultural inventories were conducted, including expeditions to monitor biodiversity.
- ACT supported the publication of technical documents supporting a special protected area declaration proposal, documents which were submitted to the Colombian environmental authority. Given the special and innovative characteristics of the declaration proposal for a Medicinal Plants Sanctuary, currently a nonexistent category in Colombia, the Special Administrative Unit of the National Parks System (UAESPNN) has required more time for legal analysis in order to approve the declaration.

#### Infrastructure

With the support of the project, 26 rural infrastructure projects were constructed, with the aim to strengthen education and apprenticeship activities (traditional classrooms), as well as healthcare promotion and conservation of biodiversity (maloca gardens, Amazon plants

nurseries, ecological paths and posts). Six municipalities in three departments benefited from these constructions, and a total of 2,090 workdays were generated.

### **National and international events**

ACT has been recognized for its work with traditional knowledge-keepers and its recognition of the importance that they have within their organizations as well as their knowledge of biodiversity management and cultural preservation. UMIYAC, in turn, has worked to expand its ties with other indigenous groups of the Americas. During the three years of the project, indigenous representatives and ACT staff have attended a range of national and international events:

- Payés Tatuyo Efraín and Benedicto Mejía: “Second International Biodiversity Symposium, the 3rd Colombian Congress of Ethnobiology, and the Symposium of the Culture of Coca”, Cali - Colombia, October 9-12, 2003.
- Members of UMIYAC attended a cultural exchange with representatives of the Cree and Mohawk indigenous groups of Canada, Bogotá, June 6-11, 2004.
- UMIYAC traditional healers were invited by Canada’s National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) to participate in the 15-day “2004 International Summit of Indigenous Elders” organized by the Six Nations of Grand River.
- The Colombian indigenous radio promoters conducted an exchange visit to discuss their public communication experience, Ecuador, September 18-26, 2004.
- In August 2004, the ACT President, the Director of the ACT-Colombia Program and the Director of the indigenous radio station Ingakuna Estéreo attended a meeting at the Bellagio in Italy to present progress made in the project “Traditional Nutrition Systems for Health Promotion.”
- Participation in the “Latin American Round Table on the Environment, Conflicts, and Local Governance”. In attendance were representatives from the Ministry of the Environment; the Regional Departmental Governments; the Regional Autonomous Corporations; the State Emergency Unit; the World Center for Research and Training in Conflict Resolution; ECOFONDO; the Embassy of the Netherlands; and the Universidad of the Sabana, Bogotá. The indigenous coordinator of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park and the ACT-Colombia communications coordinator presented the history of the creation of the Park.
- The “Round Table on Indigenous Traditional Medicine and Biodiversity” was held in Madrid, Spain under the aegis of the Ramón Areces Foundation and the Colombian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (COLCINTUR). UMIYAC was invited to participate; attending representatives were Luis Felinto and Julio Caesar Piaguaje Yaiguaje, of the Siona of the Putumayo, November 29, 2004.
- ACT’s Vice President for Projects and a representative from UMIYAC were invited by the Spanish NGO ECODESARROLLO to participate in a tour of several cities of Spain in October 2005 in order to present UMIYAC’s experience as an indigenous conservation and development program.
- The Symposium on Restorative Justice and Peace in the framework of strengthening the autonomy of the indigenous communities in the exercise of their rights was conducted in Cali, February 10-12, 2005. The ACT-Colombia legal advisor and the Governor of the Siona people attended.

- In Mocoa, during the first week of April 2005, UMIYAC attended the visit of four traditional knowledge-keepers from the Brazilian Amazon belonging to the Waurá indigenous group. Experiences in the management of traditional lands were shared, and strategies to assure the adequate transmission of the knowledge to future generations were discussed.

### **Publications and videos**

ACT provided funds for the dissemination of technical and general interest documents and documents that systematized its working methodology with indigenous groups.

- Study and Analysis of the Spatial Evolution of Forest Transformative Processes in the Amazonian Piedmont (Sector: Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park), Universidad Nacional
- Paullinia yoco: The Lifeblood of the Forest
- Onsite Conservation of Medicinal Germplasm: legal and conceptual elements for the in situ conservation of medicinal germplasm
- An ethnobiological study of the liana Paullinia yoco, vegetable indicator species of the state of biological conservation and cultural preservation in the Amazonian Piedmont
- "The Sun Has a Home" (children's book)
- History of the creation of the Alto Fragua Indi Wasi Park, financed by the Conflict and Collaboration Program of the Universidad del Paz of Costa Rica (UN)
- Basic Manual of Radio Communications Practice
- Video: "Expedition to Memory I"
- Video: "Expedition to Memory II: Searching for Yoco". Scientific support for the request for the declaration of a Special Protected Area in the Predio UMIYAC.
- Video: "The Garden of Life"
- Video: "The Parrot's Clay lick"
- Video: Health promoters

### **Disposition of Equipment**

- ACT did not purchase any equipment, i.e. anything valued at more than \$5,000 with a useful life of more than one year. Supplies such as computers, printers, and other miscellaneous office supplies are inventoried, and will continue to be used for future USAID activities, such as a subaward from PADF via USAID.

### **Administrative and financial activities**

- ACT conducted external audits of the financial status of agreement #514-A-00-03-00201-00 in accordance with circular A-133 with reference to resources provided by USAID for fiscal years 2003 and 2004. The audit opinion found no significant material instances of non-compliance.


### Key constraints & concerns

- Constant threats occasioned by a tense situation of civil order forced the redefinition or timelines and schedules on an ongoing basis. However, ACT's fieldwork strategy, based on close coordination with our indigenous collaborators and taking advantage of their neutrality in the armed conflict, permitted fulfillment of the proposed objectives.
- Internal conflicts in the Inga-Kamsá community delayed a land use and land management project of the Nukanchipa Alpa indigenous reserve in Mocoa.
- The dollar's exchange rate continued to decline through the three-year period of the project; nevertheless, the proposed activities were fulfilled. The project was planned with an exchange rate of 2,740.

Period	Average exchange rate (Colombian pesos/dollar)
29/10/02 - 21/10/03	2,856
1/11/03 - 31/10/04	2,655
1/11/04 – 29/10/05	2,336

### PROJECT SOLUTIONS AND PROJECTIONS

#### Weaknesses addressed by the project:

- The illicit economies and the violent conditions imposed by the illegal armed groups are the most serious threats to the self-managed cultural development projects of the communities facilitated by ACT utilizing USAID resources over these three years. The direct effect of these two factors is social and environmental disintegration at all levels. For the indigenous peoples, the concomitant loss of land often leads to forced displacement or voluntary migration due to absence of alternatives for a dignified life.
- This project does not have as an objective the diminution of threats; rather, it seeks to diminish the vulnerability of the communities to these threats. All of the previously described indicators demonstrate in a forceful way that the resolved or alleviated problems are manageable by the indigenous persons despite their lack of defenses. Several original weaknesses that were resolved or alleviated are of emphasis:

- Over many years, there was an absence of indigenous organizations to administer their jurisdiction impeded the development of leaders or projects to contribute to the autonomy of the specialized ways of life of the indigenous groups. These ways of life are protected by the rights enumerated in Convention 169 of the ILO and the Colombian National Constitution for ethnic groups that are differentiated from the colonist or *campesino* populations that cohabit with them in Amazonia.
- Until recently, there was a deficiency of school programs that responded to the indigenous socio-cultural identity and unity as a community.
- Many indigenous youth have been disenfranchised on their traditional lands, detached from their own authorities and receive little educational attention, while being continuously exposed to or involved in illegal activities. This situation led to an inevitable drama in the relationship between many households and the indigenous governors, but through the projects's recovery of work in ancestral agriculture and traditional medicine and most notably with the opportunity of enrollment in the Yachaicurí School, it was possible to resolve this situation and establish an educational model for an important proportion of the Ingano population.
- There has been poor utilization of agro-alimentary resources and a deficit of self-sufficiency in the domestic subsistence economy due to specialization and dependency on products.
- The production systems have been technologically and environmentally unsustainable due to loss of knowledge regarding biological resources of high nutritional value that in the past required forms of production based on diversified systems.
- The indigenous groups have experienced loss of land and infertility of soils, as well as improper management and absence of social controls over ancestral traditional lands and their resources.
- The governability of indigenous lands has been limited by the weakness of the institutional presence of the State in critical areas, by the armed conflict, and by the areas' inaccessibility to the large development programs.
- Portions of the indigenous population are vulnerable to preventable chronic illnesses, infections and social disorders. This is due to the erosion of the knowledge of the traditional healers and elders, the lack of learning on the part of the young generations and the recent economic difficulty in providing the services of these traditional health systems to the isolated populations of the Piedmont. The costs of displacement between rivers, remote areas and departments has made the visits of the traditional healers to their patients unfeasible. This project successfully consolidated a model program of food assistance to traditional healers and health brigades.

### **Future projections**

- It is clear that the project has been executed as a first phase of a much longer process conceived and discussed with the indigenous groups over several years. This first period of recovery, collective awareness-building, determination of their plans and training of human resources within the communities and the organization, provide the foundation for a second period of consolidation that must take into account the following:

- The Tandachiridu Inganokuna Association in the Caquetá is prepared to collaborate with other neighboring indigenous groups of Amazonia who wish to replicate its model throughout the Piedmont.
- The trained indigenous teams, infrastructure, assembled knowledge, exemplary practices and experiences in different fields all can serve as resources to extend the operation of the established model to the other associations that were created and provided with basic assistance under the direction of UMIYAC during the first phase.
- These created organizations must develop administrative, executive, planning, and organizational management capacities for the success of their objectives as communities. This involves the structuring of self-managed development plans (Life Plans) and practical training of coordinators for each component of these plans so that they may be responsible for public functions in their communities, including professionalization in certain areas.
- Agreement has been reached with the indigenous groups to develop integrated plans coordinated in their execution by the indigenous managing bodies within frameworks of promotion, incentive, assistance, or simple motivation.
- Also implied is the strengthening of the groups' autonomy in the formulation and execution of projects, such that it enables the legally constituted associations to seek the sustainability of their actions in coordination with government institutions and/or specialized donors.
- A new phase of continuity presumes the following, among others: 1) Indigenous managing bodies with the capacity to technically and fiscally manage all types of administrative resources; 2) Associations recognized for their effectiveness in obtaining that which is specified in their participatory plans and in arranging the development of projects in their communities with decision-making authority and responsibility regarding the commitments; 3) Indigenous rights protected and applied to activities of assistance, cooperation and improvement of living conditions; 4) New community promoters trained to provide additional communities with subsistence activities and/or licit economies; 5) Support for traditional healers and elders of the associations, complementing the previous focus on healthcare for the communities with the assistance and counsel of their organizational leaders and Life Plan coordinators; 6) Extension of the ethnoeducational model to other communities seeking sustainability in planning for the protection and management of natural resources where the state is weak. An increase in the presence of the organization with regard to the monitoring of their traditional lands against threats has been proposed. Also proposed have been measures to gain legal access to further indigenous areas historically considered by these populations as ancestral traditional lands and totaling over a million hectares.