

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT No. LAG-A-00-02-00001-00

**PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH INCLUSION, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND
DEMOCRATIZATION IN LATIN AMERICA**

I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the regulations of the Cooperative Agreement No. LAG-A-00-02-00001-00 between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR or the Institute), the IIHR submits its status report on the activities that took place from 1 June through 30 September 2005, under the component *democratization of political processes*. The life of the latter was extended by USAID until September 2006, via an amendment requested by the IIHR in 2004.

During the period of this report, USAID was considering a new amendment request that seeks an extension of the life of the three components that integrate the aforementioned agreement.

II. THE MISSION AND NATURE OF THE IIHR

The Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR) is an independent international institution, created in 1980 under an international agreement that mandates it to engage in educational and research activities related to human rights, and to promote the observance of these rights and of democracy throughout the Americas.

The IIHR's Statute defines it as an academic institution, which means that it refrains from investigating cases, presenting or supporting formal complaints against States, or monitoring the compliance of States with their international human rights obligations. This self-imposed limitation has proven to be an effective tool for the IIHR, as it has permitted the Institute to serve as a facilitator of dialogue among the different actors in the human rights movement, and between them and government representatives.

Politically, the work of the IIHR is predicated on the idea that the effective exercise of human rights is only possible within the framework of pluralist and representative democracy. In other words, the IIHR maintains that there is a close link between the full exercise of political democracy and the effective exercise of human rights.

To achieve this, democracy must transcend merely formal considerations and must incorporate excluded and disadvantaged sectors of the population. The indigenous peoples of the Americas, and women as a social group, are perhaps the most important examples. For this reason, the IIHR focuses especially on these segments of the population.

In methodological terms, the work of the IIHR is based on three premises:

- An integrated approach is essential for human rights work. Human rights constitute an integrated system, in which no single right, group of rights, or so-called 'generation' of human rights, takes precedence. Economic, social and cultural rights are as important for the effective exercise of human rights as civil and political rights.
- An interdisciplinary approach is essential for human rights work. As human rights cut across the entire social fabric, no single academic discipline can adequately address their complexity. The issues involved include those of a legal, political, historical, anthropological and philosophical nature. Only an approach that incorporates all these perspectives can deal with such a complex phenomenon.
- A multisectoral approach is essential for human rights work. Human rights issues concern different agents and sectors of society. Activists, government officials, political leaders and representatives of minorities all have a stake and share a common interest in human rights, which have attained a political consensus and which allow for different perspectives and are a source of strong internal tensions.

III. CURRENT STRUCTURE

The General Assembly, the Institute's highest governing body, is responsible for setting policies and the general parameters for the work of the IIHR. It is made up of renowned human rights experts from all parts of the hemisphere. The Assembly meets biannually but has created a Steering Committee that advises the Executive Director throughout the year.

The Executive Director, Roberto Cuéllar, from El Salvador, is responsible for carrying out the IIHR's mission as set out in its Statute, and for implementing institutional policy. He is also in charge of efforts to secure financial resources, overseeing the use of the funds and rendering accounts. The Executive Director, the Directors of the three Operating Departments and the Administrative-Financial Coordinator make up the team of the General Directorate.

A special office assists the Executive Director in implementing Institute policy related to the cooperation agencies, and the special programs for Cuba and Colombia.

For operational purposes, responsibility for implementing the IIHR's activities is assigned to the following:

Department of Civil Society Entities. This area carries out activities of human rights training and promotion with organized sectors of civil society (organizations devoted to human rights in general, and the rights of women, migrant and indigenous peoples in particular); organizes specialized fora for the discussion of emerging issues in the field of human rights; and gathers, publishes and distributes specialized materials.

Department of Public Institutions. This area is responsible for activities of human rights promotion and training with the judicial, legislative and executive branches of governments, the military, the police and the prison system; promotes legislative reform designed to improve access by members of the public to their fundamental rights; promotes the institution of the ombudsman throughout the hemisphere and provides advisory assistance to existing ombudsmen's offices; provides advisory assistance to ministries of education for the modernization of academic programs; and gathers, publishes and distributes specialized materials.

Center for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (CAPEL). Among its activities, CAPEL provides advisory and technical assistance to organizations responsible for carrying out electoral processes; holds fora for discussions and promotion with different political sectors; analyzes and discusses the issue of governance with political actors; provides advisory assistance and training and conducts research aimed at strengthening political parties; sends missions to observe elections in all parts of the hemisphere; and gathers, publishes and distributes specialized materials.

The units, on the other hand, are responsible for proposing and implementing Institute policies related to their respective fields of action, based on the guidelines established by the Board and the Executive Directorate.

Administrative-Accounting and General Services Unit: comprised of the following sections: treasury, accounting, informatics, human resources and general services.

Applied Research Unit: responsible for the Institute's policy in the areas of thematic research, integrated plans, special programs and topics that cut across all the Institute's areas of work. It oversees the "active promotion" approach, particularly as regards the three core topics (political participation, education and access to justice) and their impact in the countries on which the IIHR places special emphasis.

Educational Unit: designs, tests and implements the methodologies, teaching aids and educational and evaluative techniques that the IIHR uses in its training activities. It is creating and will maintain a data base on educational policies for primary, secondary and higher education in Latin America, and proposes ways of harmonizing the IIHR's action with educational reform projects in the region.

Information and Editorial Service Unit: responsible for the IIHR's editorial policy, for incorporating the use of Internet into the Institute's work of promoting human rights, for meeting the information needs of the target population, and for strengthening the IIHR's formal and informal networks.

A. PROMOTING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

As the request for an amendment submitted to USAID was still being considered, no activities are reported under this component, which concluded on 20 May 2005.

B. CONFLICT PREVENTION

1. PROJECT: CITIZEN SECURITY IN LATIN AMERICA: DEVELOPING A NATIONAL AND LOCAL APPROACH

As in the previous case, there are no activities to report under this project.

2. PROJECT: STRENGTHENING THE OMBUDSMAN IN LATIN AMERICA

There are no activities to report under this project, for the same reasons as in the case of the preceding projects.

3. PROJECT: RAPID RESPONSE SYSTEM

3.1. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

In the mid-20th century, two developments raised the profile of human rights: the approval, in 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the subsequent adoption of other international human rights protection instruments. The western liberal tradition was thus accepted as the basis of a legal system under which all States, regardless of their traditions, are required to respect their citizens' rights.

These two developments paved the way for the gradual transition to democracy of many Latin American countries ruled by authoritarian regimes, some of which lasted until the 1980s.

In the 1990s, the efforts focused on strengthening and consolidating democracy, structural economic reforms and, in some cases, the normalization of relations between civil society and the military.

Our countries were unable to conclude this task before the end of the 20th century, however. The region's democracies still face challenges they must address: the lack of independence of the branches of government, the weakness of the state apparatus, accountability systems that are ineffective for combating corruption and the proliferation of political parties, which leads to coalitions that are often unable to carry out the respective program of government.

Democratic stability is currently under serious threat in the Andean Region.

The Peace Accord in **Colombia** has still not taken root. In the meantime, the government is trying to convince the international community that there is no internal conflict, only a terrorist threat. However, human rights NGOs, the Catholic Church, businesspeople and the international community insist that there is an internal armed conflict, and that it has created a humanitarian crisis. They are also afraid that the paramilitary groups will gain more from the peace process than Colombian society, given the concessions made in the *Truth, Justice and*

*Reparations*¹ bill submitted to Congress by the Government. They advocate a peace process based on more than simply a policy of “forgive and forget.”

The IIHR implements projects throughout the Americas with a variety of sectors and enjoys a great deal of credibility and legitimacy. Combined with its technical expertise, this allows it to offer case-specific, direct advisory services and assistance both to government agencies and non-governmental organizations, and to act as a mediator. This, in turn, makes it easier to respond rapidly to situations that require urgent action. The results of the first stage of this project (Guatemala, September-December 2003) confirmed this.

Under the Early Warning and Rapid Response Project, and following a request from USAID-Washington and USAID-Colombia in late June this year, the IIHR/CAPEL conducted a mission 15-20 August to analyze the pre-electoral conditions in Colombia. The mission was made up of a team of first-rate international experts with experience in the areas of electoral planning, management and logistics, electoral training and citizen education, electoral informatics and political parties. This high degree of specialization made it possible to carry out the task in the limited time available.

The **Final Report, “Mission to Analyze the Pre-electoral Conditions in Colombia” (15-20/08/05)** is attached as **Annex 4**.

3.2. ANNUAL GOAL

To provide a technical and academic response, from the human rights perspective, to unforeseen emergencies that pose a threat to the rule of law and democratic governability, in at least one country in the region where both USAID and the IIHR agree it is necessary.

3.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3.3.1. Description

The project put together a team of first-rate international experts to enable it to conduct the analysis during the short time available to the mission. The group included representatives of the IIHR/CAPEL who are well known to the authorities, an official from USAID/Washington and a consultant and academic respected highly by both the IIHR/CAPEL and USAID/Colombia. The team was well equipped to garner and process a great deal of the information available in a short period of time and analyze the special circumstances that USAID and the U.S. Government must take into account in devising a strategy for electoral cooperation in Colombia.

Between 15 and 20 August, the IIHR/CAPEL carried out a mission to Colombia to analyze the pre-electoral conditions, with the following objectives:

- To identify the main problems and challenges facing the electoral organizations (basically, the National Electoral Council, the National Registry and the electoral justice mechanisms) vis-à-vis the electoral processes scheduled for 2006
- To pinpoint the main strengths and weaknesses of Colombia’s electoral system and the political system as a whole, taking into account the impact of peculiar forces (guerrilla forces, drug traffickers, paramilitary groups and others) on the electoral process

¹ Under this bill, all members of the guerrilla and paramilitary forces who lay down their arms, confess their crimes and “contribute effectively to the attainment of peace” would not have to serve prison time, regardless of the severity of the crimes they committed.

- To ascertain what CSOs exist and whether they can coordinate national electoral evaluation and monitoring efforts
- To identify the kinds of international cooperation required and the main areas in which assistance is needed for this electoral process

3.3.2. Method

The method proposed in the annual plan for 2005 was that USAID and the IIHR would identify a country where a specific situation called for an immediate technical response from the Institute. If USAID and the IIHR agreed that such an intervention were necessary, USAID would authorize the IIHR to take action under the aegis of this project.

The Directorate of CAPEL, USAID/Colombia, and then USAID-Washington, agreed on a Scope of Work document (attached to this report) that oriented the activities of the team of specialists who were in Bogotá from 15 to 20 August. As well as defining the mission's objectives and characteristics, during the process of drafting the document it became clear that it would not be possible to prepare a technical assistance project during the mission. It was also agreed that the IIHR/CAPEL's involvement in the mission would not disqualify it from participating in any subsequent tendering process organized by USAID for the development and implementation of an electoral project or projects involving technical assistance.

Despite the short time that the mission had to carry out its work program, it held a large number of meetings with a wide range of Colombian civil society and institutional actors. The aim was to obtain input from every possible angle. In every case, the mission was able to confirm the citizenry's interest in political issues in general and the expectations raised by the current pre-electoral situation. In its report, the mission confirmed that the vast majority of people interviewed spoke openly and frankly, and acknowledged the soundness of USAID/Colombia's decision to seek the opinions of different social and political actors concerning the present difficulties and the prospects offered by the pre-electoral situation in the country.

3.3.3. Background / Rationale

The management of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights agreed to a request from USAID/Washington at the end of June for CAPEL to carry out a mission to analyze the pre-electoral conditions in Colombia. The cost of the mission was covered with resources reallocated under the Agency's current cooperation agreement with the IIHR. The mission was coordinated with USAID/Colombia, the ultimate beneficiary of the activity.

The mission was urgently needed and the IIHR/CAPEL was well paced to carry it out, as it has enjoyed a solid reputation in the electoral field in Colombia for many years. Indeed, the IIHR as whole enjoys a high profile in the country; CAPEL is the Institute program that specializes in political rights and elections.

3.3.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR's Executive Director is responsible for identifying the target country and situation. He then asks the corresponding operating department to prepare and implement the action required. This is coordinated directly with USAID-Washington.

The IIHR/CAPEL's Director and team of specialists were responsible for the mission. An official from USAID/Washington and a consultant and academic highly respected by both the IIHR/CAPEL and USAID-Colombia also took part.

3.3.5. Intermediate Steps

- Identify a country and a situation that warrant a rapid technical response from a human rights perspective: Colombia
- Reach agreement with USAID-Washington, which authorizes the action
- Draft a work plan

3.3.6. Results or outputs

Under the work program, the team conducted interviews with:

- The National Registry (including the National Registrar, the area managers and directors, the Electoral Registrar, the Director of Electoral Management, the Director of the Electoral Census, the Manager of Human Talent and the Manager of Informatics)
- The members of the National Electoral Council
- The Director of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Defense
- The Human Rights Director of the President's Office
- The Ombudsman and specialized members of his staff
- The nongovernmental organizations Viva La Ciudadanía, Transparencia por Colombia and the Colombian Committee of Jurists
- Colombian academics from several universities
- The Episcopal Conference (Monsignor Henao and his collaborators)
- Representatives of political parties (Liberal Party, New Party, Colombian Conservative Party, Conservative Party, Team Colombia)
- The United Nations Project for the design and modernization of the Colombian electoral system
- Sweden's embassy and cooperation office in Colombia
- The U.S. embassy and officials of USAID/Colombia

The mission found that the different viewpoints expressed gave a balanced picture of the characteristics and problems of the pre-electoral situation and possible solutions. It also warned that more intensive assessments were needed of the nongovernmental organizations, because organized civil society in Colombia is highly diverse and the NGOs' level of development varies considerably. A more detailed and careful analysis is therefore required.

The mission also pointed out that its work was concentrated in the metropolitan area of Bogotá, due to cost, time and security constraints. It did try to introduce national perspectives into the interviews and analysis, however.

3.3.7. Impact indicators

“Implementation of a rapid response plan of action in a specific country to reduce threats to the effective exercise of human rights”

The mission's level of specialization and vast expertise compensated for the limited time available to it for carrying out its task. The work program was designed to facilitate the greatest possible contact with the various actors.

Based on the interviews, the mission concluded that a favorable environment exists for additional international cooperation on electoral matters in Colombia. Many of the people interviewed pinpointed the same areas for possible assistance (training, efforts to inform and shape public opinion, institution building, technical assistance and electoral observation).

This mission achieved its objective of obtaining, processing and analyzing, in a short time, both a great deal of the available information and the unique aspects of the current situation that USAID and the U.S. Government must take into consideration in devising a strategy for electoral cooperation in Colombia.

Mindful of the time constraints imposed by the current electoral process, the members of the **Mission to analyze the pre-electoral conditions in Colombia** drew up a set of short and medium- to long-term recommendations in order of priority. They did so in order to make it easier for USAID decision makers to prioritize the lines of work they wish to support.

Means of verification

- Work program completed by the mission
- Aide-mémoire of the interviews carried out with representatives of government agencies, different sectors of civil society and international organizations
- Final Report: Mission to Analyze the pre-electoral conditions in Colombia (15-20/08/05)

3.4. LESSONS LEARNED

In its report, the mission endeavors to shed light on how support can be provided rather than in what areas, bearing in mind that the situation in Colombia is complex and, in a way, unique. That makes it a challenge but also an opportunity for international cooperation and, in particular, cooperation from USAID. Therefore, it is suggested that any program for this country regarding electoral matters should consider:

- The use of criteria flexible enough to make it possible to adapt the resources to the different scenarios that could develop (for example, following the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the president's right to seek reelection) and the approval or otherwise of basic rules for the electoral process, including rulings on its legality.
- The desirability of coordinating actions with other sources of cooperation, since there are likely to be other programs interested in investing resources in electoral matters and gaps or duplication in cooperation should be avoided.
- The need for systems for monitoring and evaluating the attainment of the objectives of USAID's cooperation, in order to maximize the use of resources and study the impact achieved, even before the final results are in.
- The need to make USAID's support in this field visible, preferably by means of a slogan that identifies the cooperation's commitment to strengthening Colombian democracy. This would offset any possible negative reactions or mistaken impressions regarding the international cooperation and the reasons for it.

C. DEMOCRATIZATION OF POLITICAL PROCESSES

1. PROJECT: STRENGTHENING ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

1.1. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

During the period under review (July-September 2005), the Nineteenth Conference of the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean took place in Flores, El Petén, Guatemala. The Tikal Protocol took advantage of the event (held 26-29 September) to organize activities to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of its founding. The theme of the conference was *“The Tikal Protocol, from the germ of an idea to what it has become today”* and the President of Guatemala, Oscar Berger Perdomo, the President of Congress, Jorge Méndez Herbruger, and the Governor and mayors of the province of El Petén took part in the opening ceremony. The conference participants included senior officials from the electoral bodies of Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and St. Lucia.

During this quarter, the Electoral Network decided not to go ahead with the electronic forum on electoral jurisprudence on the democratization of parties. A forum on democracy and inclusion began operating on 9 February 2005 (see January-April report) but elicited a poor response. As the topic of the third forum planned for this year had been discussed in that first one, the organizers decided to postpone implementation of the new forum. Moreover, only one person has taken part in the electronic forum on the control of election spending launched at the end of June. Consequently, we shall have to consider whether it is worthwhile continuing to hold forums of this kind.

A total of 569 people are currently registered with the red-electoral@iidh.ed.cr database. The list has been growing gradually. The only exception was a request from USAID/Peru official Kimberly Delaney (received 12 August) to be removed from the list.

Horizontal cooperation missions have been programmed for Honduras (November 2005) and Chile (December 2005). The exploratory mission to Nicaragua (September 2005) was not carried out because the subject of the 2006 elections in that country was discussed with the electoral judges who took part in the Nineteenth Conference of the Tikal Protocol. For this reason, and to save resources, the mission was replaced with a horizontal cooperation mission to Bolivia, as snap presidential elections were called for 4 December 2005, after President Mesa resigned following two years of political crisis. However, this election could be postponed until such time as Congress enacts a law redrawing constituency boundaries, as the country's Constitutional Court has ordered. Attending the referendum in Ecuador (11 December 2005) was also made a priority, given the current sensitive political situation and the technical assistance project we are implementing there. However, this plebiscite could be postponed as well, due to internal political decisions. The Election Calendar through December 2005 is attached as an annex.

The exploratory mission to Chile originally planned for June was carried out at the beginning of September, to provide follow-up to the project *“Workshops on the Reform of Political Campaigns in Chile”* and to discuss with Chile's Electoral Service and Elections Tribunal details of the mission of electoral judges and officials that will be visiting the country for the presidential and legislative elections slated for 11 December 2005.

The exploratory mission to Peru, originally programmed for October 2005, was rescheduled for December; the timing of the visit to Peru's electoral bodies is all-important.

Under the project Technical Assistance to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Honduras, during this quarter the staff continued to assist the TSE in preparing the General Elections slated for November 2005, basically in the areas of training and administration and electoral logistics. The IIHR-CAPEL missions carried out during this quarter were coordinated closely with Honduran citizen organizations that are preparing to observe the process.

With regard to the project Technical Assistance to Ecuador, an IIHR/CAPEL mission was in Quito 23-25 August for meetings with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and USAID/Ecuador, to reactivate the activities of the electoral technical assistance project that the IIHR-CAPEL has been implementing since 2004.

This project does not appear in the 2005 Work Plan, because it was undertaken at the express request of USAID and Ecuador's Supreme Electoral Tribunal in the first quarter of 2005 and was extended through December 2005 due to the new outstanding balance mentioned and the need to follow up on what was achieved in 2004.

1.2. ANNUAL GOALS

The Strengthening Electoral Institutions project has two annual goals:

- To consolidate the activities of the Inter-American Electoral Network aimed at strengthening electoral organizations
- To strengthen selected electoral organizations and those engaged in electoral and political reform processes in 2005

1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

1.3.1. INTER-AMERICAN ELECTORAL NETWORK

1.3.1.1. Description

Composed of UNIORE's member organizations, the Network provides links for regular communication and information sharing. Civil society organizations (CSOs) with a stake in electoral issues (Lima Agreement), academics and members of political parties are also involved in this activity.

The Network operates year-round. During this quarter (July-September), it continued to facilitate information sharing and communication among its members, particularly during the Nineteenth Conference of the Tikal Protocol.

1.3.1.2. Method

The Network's most concrete activities take place via the IIHR/CAPEL Web page, whose new address is www.iidh.ed.cr/capel, to make it easier for users to access it. The organizations that make up the network of networks contributed information such as current national political and electoral legislation; and details of new members of their management and governing bodies - Peru's electoral bodies were a case in point. In its capacity as the Executive Secretariat, the IIHR/CAPEL produced the UNIORE newsletters for July, August and September 2005 (in both languages, except for the September issue, which is in the process of being translated into English). The Network continued to provide virtual communication tools, such as the International Electoral News Service (SINE). The Electoral Tribunal of Panama prepares the information and it is then disseminated widely via email.

1.3.1.3. Background / Rationale

The IIHR/CAPEL continued to systematize information in its capacity as the Executive Secretariat of the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean (Tikal Protocol, 1985), the Association of Electoral Bodies of South America (Quito Protocol, 1989) and the Inter-American Union of Electoral Bodies (UNIORE, 1991). The latter comprises the two associations plus the electoral bodies of Canada, the USA and Mexico.

The continuity of the electoral network made it possible to keep all the members abreast of the latest developments. During this quarter in particular, the updating of the information was completed, making it more effective and accurate.

1.3.1.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR/CAPEL team of specialists, in coordination with the associations of electoral organizations and the Electoral Tribunal of Panama (SINE). Communication and contact with members of electoral bodies and CSOs involved in political and electoral issues, and with local USAID offices, for informational purposes or to identify joint initiatives.

1.3.1.5. Intermediate Steps

- The Election Calendar and the Directory of Electoral Bodies were updated and new papers sent in by electoral judges were uploaded to the Web page
- The IIHR/CAPEL and other institutions provided continuous input for SINE news items

1.3.1.6. Results or Outputs:

The following work was done on the Electoral Network's Web page during this quarter:

“Associations of Electoral Bodies” Section

a. Tikal Protocol

- The agreements adopted during the Nineteenth Conference were posted on the page
- The national reports sent in by the countries that attended the Nineteenth Conference were uploaded (Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Nicaragua and Saint Lucia)
- *Directory of Electoral Bodies*
- The files on the following electoral bodies were updated:
 - Supreme Electoral Tribunal of El Salvador
 - National Electoral Court of Bolivia
 - Supreme Elections Tribunal of Costa Rica
 - Supreme Electoral Council of Nicaragua
 - Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Ecuador
 - Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Honduras
 - State Elections Commission of Puerto Rico
 - Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala
 - Central Electoral Board of the Dominican Republic
 - Electoral Advisory Committee of Jamaica
 - Federal Election Commission of the United States

- Federal Electoral Tribunal of Mexico
- Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico

b. UNIORE newsletters

- Spanish and English versions of the June newsletter were uploaded to the Web page
- Spanish and English versions of the July newsletter were uploaded to the Web page
- Spanish and English versions of the August newsletter were uploaded to the Web page
- The Spanish version of the September newsletter was uploaded to the Web page

“Electoral Legislation” Section

a. Political Constitutions

The political constitutions of the following countries were updated:

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Puerto Rico

b. Electoral Legislation

The electoral legislation of the following countries was updated:

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- Guatemala
- Nicaragua
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Puerto Rico

“Election Calendar” Section

- The list of electoral events for 2005 and 2006 was updated and new information added

“Publications” Section

Specialized publications

- The academic paper “Automatización, informatización y voto electrónico en la experiencia electoral reciente de América Latina: una perspectiva desde la observación electoral” was added to the section. It was written by José Thompson

Projects

- The image that appears at the start of the section was updated

a. Electoral Jurisprudence

- The electoral jurisprudence of Panama was uploaded to the page

b. Political Parties

- The documents on the democratization of political parties in Bolivia, Chile and the Dominican Republic were posted
- The conclusions of the political party workshops for the Southern Cone and Mexico were uploaded to the page

1.3.1.7. Impact Indicators:

“Network of electoral organizations in the region expanded and strengthened”

“More documentation and comparative experiences, which will be used as input for the work of the associations and research projects”

“Electoral organizations and other members of the Electoral Network have more up-to-date knowledge”

“Easier access to up-to-date political and electoral information”

During this quarter (July-September 2005), the staff continued to post online the main papers and presentations produced by the conferences held (on this occasion, the Tikal Protocol), as well as the documents containing the conclusions of the workshops held with political parties in the Southern Cone and Mexico. Another contribution included was the document “Democratización de los partidos políticos en Bolivia, Chile y República Dominicana,” presented at the specialized consultation that took place 28-29 July in San Jose, Costa Rica. It contains the findings of the IIHR/CAPEL’s research in 3 countries of the hemisphere (Bolivia, Chile and the Dominican Republic) under the project Equal Representation and Political Party Reform.

Means of verification:

- Inter-American Electoral Network
- Three UNIORE newsletters (issues 51, 52 and 53), for July (in Spanish and English), August (in Spanish and English) and September (in Spanish; now being translated into English)
- Distribution lists (total of 569 people)
- IIHR/CAPEL Web page: www.iidh.ed.cr/capel

1.3.2. UNIORE NEWSLETTERS

1.3.2.1. Description

Three newsletters (issues 51, 52 and 53) were distributed during this quarter (July-September), in English (except #53) and Spanish.

The newsletters were distributed among the members of UNIORE, CSOs involved in electoral issues (particularly those of the Lima Agreement), certain organizations belonging to the Inter-American Network for Democracy (RID), academics, members of political parties, donors and local USAID offices.

1.3.2.2. Method

The monthly newsletters were disseminated electronically in July and August via the IIHR/CAPEL's specialized section, the IIHR's Web page and the SINE. These newsletters continue to increase horizontal cooperation among the electoral bodies, as they are a two-way communication tool. They include articles by UNIORE members who wish to share points of interest regarding specific national situations, or discuss emerging issues. The IIHR/CAPEL receives the information and produces the newsletters.

1.3.2.3. Background / Rationale

Produced in response to repeated requests from the electoral organizations for an expeditious means of disseminating information about important electoral developments in the western hemisphere, these newsletters have helped keep the target population informed of important matters related to political rights in the Americas. The newsletters are a permanent information strategy. Combined with the electronic links and electoral news service, they ensure that information circulates rapidly.

1.3.2.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR/CAPEL, in coordination with the members of UNIORE. The information contained in the UNIORE newsletters is sent to, and shared with, USAID-Washington. The newsletters are emailed to the local USAID offices and to the members of the Inter-American Electoral Network.

1.3.2.5. Intermediate Steps

- The project continued to compile information
- Graphic production and design of the material
- UNIORE newsletters posted on CAPEL's specialized section of the IIHR's website and the SINE
- The July and August newsletters were translated into English

1.3.2.6. Results or Outputs

Three monthly newsletters were produced during this quarter, for July (issue 51, in English and Spanish), August (issue 52, in English and Spanish) and September (issue 53, in Spanish). The last one is in the process of being translated into English. These newsletters are available on the SINE and on CAPEL's specialized section of the Web page: www.iidh.ed.cr/capel

1.3.2.7. Impact Indicators

“Electoral information disseminated more widely in the Americas”

“More documents and experiences shared on electoral topics and processes in the region”

“Users of the Network more conversant with electoral topics and processes in the region”

During this quarter, the UNIORE newsletters were well received both by old and new members of the Network. In emails received, they thanked the IIHR/CAPEL for sending them the information and endorsed the newsletters' content. Only one person asked to be removed from the mailing list - USAID/Peru official Kimberly Delaney, after receiving the UNIORE newsletter for July 2005.

Means of verification:

- Inter-American Electoral Network (Web page)
- UNIORE newsletters (issues 51, 52 and 53)
- Distribution list (569 people)
- Emails sent to the IIHR/CAPEL

1.3.3. TIKAL PROTOCOL

1.3.3.1. Description

The Nineteenth Conference of the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean (Tikal Protocol) took place 26-29 September in the city of Flores, El Petén province, Guatemala. It was co-sponsored by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. Some 32 delegates from the electoral organizations of Central America and the Caribbean took part, plus six people from the Executive Secretariat (IIHR/CAPEL), and four experts (speakers). Annexes attached to this report contain the program for the event, the list of delegates and the resolutions adopted.

1.3.3.2. Method

The IIHR/CAPEL issued a notice of meeting for the Nineteenth Conference of the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean (Tikal Protocol), which coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Tikal Protocol. In this connection, the theme of the conference was “The Tikal Protocol - from the germ of an idea to what it has become today.”

1.3.3.3. Background / Rationale

In its capacity as the Executive Secretariat, the IIHR/CAPEL entered into negotiations with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala to determine how the event would be financed and whether it could be held in Flores, where the Association came into being in 1985. The host electoral body always defrays a significant part of the costs of these events. The specifics vary from country to country and depend on the electoral body involved, but the basic approach is one of shared responsibility. The meetings of the electoral bodies serve a twofold purpose: to establish policies and orient the Association's efforts; and, to discuss research and update the agenda for promoting democracy in the region.

1.3.3.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR/CAPEL, in coordination with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala. Communication and contact with local USAID office, for informational purposes.

1.3.3.5. Intermediate Steps

- Set the date of the Conference
- Reach agreement with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala on the division of responsibilities
- Contact and issue the notice of meeting to members of the association
- Select speakers (experts)
- Prepare Executive Secretariat's report
- Coordinate presentation of national reports

1.3.3.6. Results or Outputs

Participation of 32 delegates from electoral bodies in Central America and the Caribbean, plus 6 people from the Executive Secretariat (IIHR/CAPEL) and 4 experts on the theme of the activity (speakers).

Paper by Jorge Mario García Laguardia, entitled "The Tikal Protocol - from the germ of an idea to what it has become today." Available in CAPEL's specialized section of the IIHR's Web page (<http://www.iidh.ed.cr/comunidades/redelectoral>).

National Reports from every Central American and Caribbean country that belongs to the Tikal Protocol, on the topics of technical assistance, horizontal cooperation and information sharing, training and civic education, technical election observation missions, electoral reform, informatics and technological development, and administration and electoral logistics.

Most of these diagnostic assessments are available on the IIHR/CAPEL Web page (Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and St. Lucia).

Agreements of the Conference, available in CAPEL's specialized section on the IIHR website (<http://www.iidh.ed.cr/comunidades/redelectoral>).

1.3.3.7. Impact Indicators

"Electoral organizations have more specialized technical knowledge about the internal democratization of political parties"

"Progress in updating the Work Program of the Association of Electoral Bodies of the Tikal Protocol"

"More and stronger partnerships of electoral organizations leading to joint actions on technical electoral matters"

"Increase in the number of active members of the Association of Electoral Bodies of the Tikal Protocol"

The host electoral body (TSE/Guatemala) and the Secretariat were keen to ensure that the Conference provided an opportunity for the members of the Association to share practical,

technical and legal information. Therefore, they asked each member to prepare a document that included the respective institution's thoughts regarding the main topics on which the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean focuses. These topics were:

- Technical assistance
- Horizontal cooperation and information sharing
- Training and civic education (where applicable)
- Technical election observation missions
- Electoral reform
- Informatics and technology development
- Administration and electoral logistics

All the electoral bodies sent in their reports on time, for presentation at the conference in blocks. The delegates exchanged information on the current work of the members of the Association, providing updates regarding their institution's efforts in certain areas important to all the members and of concern to the Association. On this occasion, no mention was made of the possibility of attracting new members to the Tikal Protocol.

In the agreements adopted, the delegates updated the work program, which can be consulted in Annex 3 of this report.

1.3.3.8. Means of verification

- List of participants
- Program of the Event
- Inter-American Electoral Network, Web page
- (<http://www.iidh.ed.cr/comunidades/redelectoral>)
- UNIORE newsletters
- Agreements of the Nineteenth Conference of the Tikal Protocol
- Report of the Executive Secretariat

1.3.4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL OF HONDURAS

1.3.4.1 Description

The project consists of providing specialized advisory assistance to the TSE-Honduras and the Federation of Development Organizations of Honduras (FOPRIDEH) in the fields of electoral organization, training and citizen education. This activity will be carried out between January and December 2005, provided sufficient resources are available to cover the costs involved. The specific advisers will be selected depending on who is available and what their areas of specialization are. It is anticipated that experiences like those of Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay can be adapted for this purpose. Each advisory assistance activity will entail an evaluation of what has gone before and planning of what should be done next.

During this quarter (July-September), the project continued to assist the TSE with the preparations for the General Elections slated for November 2005, basically advising the Training Commission on training matters and electoral administration and logistics. The work with FOPRIDEH and other CSOs also continued, to strengthen the activities they will be carrying out related to the elections. Further details can be found in the respective reports on the missions undertaken in August and September 2005 (see annexes).

1.3.4.2. Method

The advisory assistance will be provided to the TSE-Honduras and the Federation of Development Organizations of Honduras (FOPRIDEH) by means of advisers specializing in educational matters and the design and implementation of election calendars.

During this quarter, it was agreed with the President of the TSE that the IIHR/CAPEL will continue to lend technical support to the Training Commission during forthcoming missions.

1.3.4.3. Background / Rationale

The ongoing comprehensive reform in Honduras involves changes in voting procedures, in the composition and functions of the TSE and in the election of lawmakers. For this reason, support is needed for at least two components of the new electoral process:

-Citizen education (with the participation of the NGO “FOPRIDEH”)

-Advisory assistance to the TSE regarding implementation of the schedule, with emphasis on training

The IIHR/CAPEL has worked with the TSE on other occasions and will use the mechanism of horizontal cooperation, based on the contribution of electoral officials.

1.3.4.4 Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR/CAPEL team of specialists, with specific advisers for each component.

Communication and contact with the local USAID office, to keep it informed and coordinate the work.

Coordination with the TSE and FOPRIDEH.

1.3.4.5 Intermediate Steps

During this quarter (July-September) there were:

-Regular visits by consultants Horacio Cánepa y Jaime Márquez

1.3.4.6. Results or Outputs

During the reporting period, two reports on technical visits were produced. These are attached (see annexes).

1.3.4.7. Impact Indicators

“The NGO FOPRIDEH trained to implement the National Voter Education Plan”

“Updating training for TSE-Honduras staff with regard to the election calendar, as a guide to the electoral process”

During this quarter (July-September) no results were obtained that indicate progress in achieving these indicators, as the project is ongoing.

Means of verification:

Mission reports (see annexes)

1.4 LESSONS LEARNED

Commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the first association of electoral bodies ever created has been a very enriching experience. Everyone connected with the association has been able to review what has been achieved over the last 20 years, as it was the theme of the Nineteenth Conference, "*The Tikal Protocol - from the germ of an idea to what it has become today.*" In this section, we share the long list of achievements and lessons learned over the years.

Firstly, this association was founded at a time when democracy was still being restored in the Americas and its fate was by no means certain. The Tikal Protocol offered the electoral organizations a way to support and cooperate with each other. Its creation thus marked the start of institutional consolidation processes that proved to be vitally important for democratic stability and paved the way for the "second generation" of reforms designed to bolster democracy in Latin America.

The Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean also marked a watershed in the development of the "international dimension" to democracy. Its Charter underlines the importance of international cooperation for democratic development and the validity of international electoral observation as a means of fine-tuning electoral systems. The Tikal Protocol's development in both areas has been quite remarkable.

This region took a bold decision with respect to international cooperation on democracy issues and on specialized electoral technical matters in particular, and the decision was soon vindicated. The Association has become an accepted part of every electoral process carried out in its geographical area, with a growing amount of horizontal cooperation and fruitful exchanges that can be managed either in a carefully planned or spontaneous way.

Technical assistance and horizontal cooperation have been boosted by means of agreements among the electoral organizations themselves and others involving international entities such as the IIHR/CAPEL, which, since the Tikal Protocol was created, has implemented projects in all the Central American countries and in some of the Caribbean nations. The technical advances and pioneering initiatives of one organization can be a boon for the work of others. The areas in which technical assistance is provided have also changed considerably. In the beginning, it was basically a contribution to ensure that electoral processes were carried out correctly. Now it has become more diverse and complex, including aspects as varied as the financing of politics, improved identity documents and the democratization of political parties. Technical assistance has thus become more comprehensive and the electoral organizations have a broader, more complex agenda.

The same is true of election observation. In the early days of the Tikal Protocol, technical observation was in its infancy and considerable efforts were needed to create more confidence in the electoral community's recommendations. Today, Central America and the Caribbean continue to set an example to the rest of the world in terms of the number of observation missions undertaken and the different way in which missions are organized and the information is processed. Even more importantly, the Tikal Protocol itself provides the institutional framework for the observation. It thus originates from the resolve and concern of the people who organize elections and not an external agenda dependent on interests alien to the electoral community.

The electoral organizations have grown over the course of the last two decades, overcoming obstacles along the way. In doing so, they have developed more capable, more experienced and more professional technical staff. They have helped create a pool of human talent recognized for its quality and diversity, which has not only provided input for technical assistance but also made a decisive contribution to the growth of electoral doctrine, the debates that have taken place and the generation of specialized knowledge. The Tikal Protocol has developed forums, seminars and meetings and supported important initiatives aimed at expanding the areas of research and the agenda of democracy issues. The Association's own conferences also began to be used to address and discuss the key issues facing democratic and electoral life not only in this region but also in the rest of the western hemisphere.

Through the agreements adopted at its meetings, the Tikal Protocol has promoted assessments and specialized comparative studies on various subjects that have led to research and the production of the respective publications.

The IIHR/CAPEL has also continued to produce doctrine that has been used to study the political agenda of the Americas and as a tool for determining new lines of action. It has developed new ways of sharing information through its Web page (much of its doctrine is available on line) and produces and distributes the monthly UNIORE newsletters.

Thanks to this combination of doctrine and technological support available via its Web page, the Executive Secretariat is well placed to spearhead new lines of action that are a priority for the Tikal Protocol, such as the professionalization and training of electoral officials for institution building, informatics-related topics and electoral training. Several specialized meetings of training units have already been held on informatics and electoral training topics.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the Tikal Protocol is the fact that its Executive Secretariat is a unit of an international institution. The IIHR/CAPEL is proud to have been in charge of this work since the Protocol was created and the reforms instituted in 1998 were designed to place the Association's work and the role of the Secretariat on a more permanent footing. The IIHR/CAPEL has made its role as the secretariat of the associations of electoral organizations a special priority, integrating it into its projects and work in general and strengthening the impact of the decisions adopted at each conference.

The IIHR/CAPEL regards the agreements adopted at the conferences of the different associations as instructions or requests that the Executive Secretariat must take note of and, when pertinent, act on. As a result, the IIHR/CAPEL's program of work as an institution is influenced by the electoral organizations' decisions and this interrelationship has led to the Tikal Protocol - and, where appropriate, the Quito Protocol and UNIORE - being included in the widely varying initiatives and projects that the IIHR/CAPEL implements.

In short, the Tikal Protocol has become:

- A mechanism for expeditious communication among its members
- An opportunity for cooperation and expressions of solidarity among the electoral organizations, whose members have supported their colleagues or countries in difficult times
- The countries of the sub-region formulated the concept of horizontal cooperation and have since developed and made intensive use of it
- The electoral organizations have participated enthusiastically in the Association's activities and practiced reciprocity with regard to the international observation of elections
- The Association has played a key role in the development of a large body of electoral law in the Americas

- It has made a major contribution to the democratization of Central America over the last fifteen years
- Its contributions to the electoral technical aspects of democratic transition in Central America have encompassed a range of topics, such as civil registries, electoral rolls, the fast transmission of results, international observation and the system of political parties
- There has been a considerable increase in the training of middle-level management and electoral officials

The Association's influence has extended beyond its geographical area, however. Following the creation of the Association of Electoral Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean, others were set up in the Americas - the Association of South American Electoral Bodies (1989) and the Inter-American Union of Electoral Bodies (1992). The Association of Caribbean Electoral Organizations was also created in 1998.

The trend also extended beyond the Americas. For example, the Association of Electoral Officials of Central Europe was created in 1991 in Budapest, Hungary; in Africa, the Association of African Electoral Authorities was created in Kampala, Uganda, in 1997; and in Asia, the Association of Electoral Authorities of Asia was set up in 1998 in Manila, Philippines. The universalization of such associations led to international meetings of their members being organized.

In short, the institutions in charge of administering elections in the region have become increasingly important and a focus of attention, due to the interest in consolidating the democratic system. Great faith has been placed in these organizations: they are expected to guarantee free and fair elections and help institutionalize political life in the Latin American countries. This is why electoral organizations have formed part of nearly all the political reform programs implemented in the region in recent years, and continue to do so.

2. PROJECT: EQUAL REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL PARTY REFORM

2.1 General Framework

With regard to the preparation of a strategic plan, in the report for the previous quarter (April-June 2005) it was stated that the Democracy Fellow and the Expert Consultant had completed their work and delivered a draft that required major modifications and adjustments. During this quarter (July-September 2005), the draft was restructured and found to be seriously flawed as far as the plan's focus, content and orientation were concerned. As a result, the IIHR/CAPEL decided to reprogram the meeting of experts called for in the plan.

The processing of the data gathered at the four regional workshops on the strengthening of political parties is yielding valuable information that will be used as input for a new strategic plan that will be prepared and presented to the meeting of experts that is still pending. This meeting will be held at the end of 2005 or in early 2006, depending on when the internal document containing the processed information is completed.

The pilot projects in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic were due to get under way in September 2005. These were the countries specified in the Strategic Plan but the team discarded the idea of working in Ecuador due to the complicated political situation, which has led to changes in the governmental structure and in political activities. However, the pilot plan in the Dominican Republic is going ahead as planned, for several reasons: a) the legislative environment is favorable, particularly as a new law on political parties was enacted; b) the Central Electoral Board, a member of the Tikal Protocol, is assigned specific responsibilities in this area; c) USAID-Dominican Republic is sponsoring an initiative on the same topic, making it possible to pool efforts and resources; d) the results of the meetings held in that country under the project for the internal democratization of political parties highlighted lines of action on which we have been working; and, e) the results of the meetings confirm the usefulness of further work in that country, with two counterparts being identified - Participación Ciudadana and the Technological Institute of Santo Domingo (INTEC), under the aegis of its Governability Project. The pilot project in the Dominican Republic will get under way in October 2005.

Under the project "*Workshops on the Reform of Political Campaigns in Chile,*" which the IIHR/CAPEL is implementing with the Corporación PARTICIPA and the Electoral Service of Chile, the seminar planned for the second half of 2005 was affected by recent political reforms to the financing system. We were obliged to reschedule it for early 2006, to analyze the implications of the issue for the presidential elections in Chile slated for 11 December 2005 and then gauge the impact once the elections have taken place. However, the Director of the IIHR/CAPEL will make a follow-up visit in October 2005.

The working meeting on the "*Development and dissemination of concrete proposals for the internal democratization of political parties in Bolivia, Chile and the Dominican Republic*" took place 27-28 July 2005, in San Jose, Costa Rica. The dates were chosen as leading experts in this field were scheduled to be in Costa Rica at that time taking part in other IIHR academic activities.

With regard to the Web page, during the period under review (July-September 2005), project staff and the IIHR's Information and Editorial Services Unit studied various proposals for the redesign of the Electoral Network. The most attractive and functional proposal includes the development and management of the specialized section as a portal that would make it possible to standardize all the sources of information and services. The staff is waiting for the company to submit a new financial proposal taking into account our suggestions and needs. It will be implemented immediately.

The work got under way on the specialized texts that will be ready by the end of year. They will deal with the subjects of institutionalization, democratization and transparency, and the main ways in which these issues reinforce or cancel each other out. The IIHR/CAPEL organized an editorial meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 26 July 2005 with several experts who will be working on the project. Doubts were cleared up and specific objectives set. The deadline for delivery of the final drafts is 21 October 2005.

Only preparatory activities were carried out in relation to the Web page and specialized texts projects during this quarter. Full details will be provided in the quarterly report for October-December 2005.

2.2. ANNUAL GOAL

To implement national pilot projects, with the respective academic support and in at least one country in the region, which could be replicated in other countries, based on the development of a Strategic Plan for the strengthening, democratization and transparency of political parties

2.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

2.3.1. DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR ADVANCING THE INTERNAL DEMOCRATIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

2.3.1.1. Description

A two-day working meeting took place 28-29 July 2005 in San Jose, Costa Rica with a group of 25 people drawn from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Paraguay and Peru. Six IIHR/CAPEL officials were involved. The List of Participants and Program are attached as **Annex 1 and Annex 2**.

2.3.1.2. Method

The IIHR/CAPEL's team of specialists, assisted by specialized consultants, translated the conclusions of the findings, and of the national meetings held to disseminate and discuss them in 2003 and 2004, into proposals and models for promoting the internal democratization of political parties. This information will be validated at a working meeting with representatives of electoral bodies, civil society organizations and political actors from the countries studied (Bolivia, Chile, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica - the country where the IIHR has its headquarters) to determine the existence and possible usefulness of the proposals. The results will reach a wider audience as they will be disseminated via a printed publication, a CD-ROM version of the same publication and CAPEL's Web page.

2.3.1.3. Background / Rationale

The results compiled, systematized, validated and presented will be used to identify problems, gaps and good practices in the democratic life of the political parties of the countries selected. At the inter-American level, no systematized information is available of the kind proposed for this component. This will be very useful for the approaches related to the status of democracy in the Americas and the different subregions; and for electoral bodies or other public or civil society organizations interested in promoting electoral reform or the reform of the political party system in their respective countries. Another comparative advantage of having the IIHR-CAPEL and its network of collaborators and counterparts implement this component is that a multiplier effect will be achieved via the communication and promotion mechanisms of the Inter-American Electoral Network.

2.3.1.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR-CAPEL team of specialists, in collaboration with national counterparts from electoral bodies, civil society organizations and political parties. The findings will be shared with local USAID missions, which will contribute their opinions regarding the conditions and aspects that should be taken into consideration in implementing the meeting planned for July 2005.

2.3.1.5. Intermediate Steps

Convert the systematization of national practices and validations into models and recommendations that could be used to democratize political parties

Publish a summary document in printed and electronic form

Identify suitable multiplier agents in the countries selected

Convene a working meeting

2.3.1.6. Results or Outputs

A working meeting with participants from the countries selected; the report on the working meeting; the dissemination of the proposals and recommendations; a printed publication; a CD-ROM, Web page (www.iidh.ed.cr/capel).

2.3.1.7. Impact Indicators

“The IIHR-CAPEL has more technical expertise for its strategic activities aimed at strengthening political parties”

“More validated proposals on ways of democratizing political parties in the countries selected, based on comparative experiences”

“Broadening of the public debate regarding proposals for democratizing political parties in the countries selected (Chile, Bolivia and Dominican Republic)”

“Appropriation of the debate by the political parties”

Based on the results of the meeting, the forthcoming publication of the document containing the results and the comparative analysis looks set to be received as positively as it was by the academics, representatives of political parties and senior electoral officials who took part in the meeting itself. All agreed that this type of research offers a large, but also specific, number of areas of work for strengthening political parties.

Means of Verification:

- UNIORE Newsletter #51 (July 2005)
- 9 documents containing the reactions of the participants in the July 2005 meeting to the source document proposed by the IIHR/CAPEL (Report) for organizing the discussion at the activity. (Annex 3). Please note that a copy of the source document proposed by the IIHR/CAPEL was attached to the report sent to USAID covering the quarter April-June 2005.

2.4. LESSONS LEARNED

An important lesson learned during this period - related to the project *“Workshops on the Reform of Political Campaigns in Chile”* - is how difficult it is to plan efforts designed to ensure transparency when there are still no hard and fast rules in place governing electoral processes. Further reforms have been proposed recently that would impinge on the implementation of the type of monitoring proposed by the project. As a result, the seminar planned for October 2005 will have to be postponed until 2006 and will consist more of an evaluation of the application throughout the 2005 electoral process, which culminates with the presidential elections on 11 December 2005.

There were interesting developments with regard to the activity *“Development and dissemination of concrete proposals for promoting the internal democratization of political parties,”* which focused on Bolivia, Chile and the Dominican Republic. Having both a national perspective and those of different sectors made it possible to confirm the research’s usefulness for strengthening political parties, especially with regard to the question of democratization. It also led to the staff to rethink aspects of the work that is to be carried out further down the road.

The meeting also confirmed the wisdom of the strategy of consulting various sectors (academics, politicians, citizen organizations and donor agencies) and that our conclusions were correct. The meeting helped us to interpret the findings better but the most important thing was that they were validated. The meeting also enabled us to pinpoint future actions, which is important for defining actions as part of a strategic plan with political parties.

Furthermore, consulting such a wide variety of stakeholders revealed the strong interest that exists in strengthening political parties and that the issue can continue to be addressed from different perspectives.

Finally, we reached the conclusion that redesigning the Web page is not enough; it needs to be restructured to absorb new components, such as the work with political parties.

PROJECT: EQUAL REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL PARTY REFORM

SCHEDULE UPDATED AS OF SEPTEMBER 2005

ACTIVITIES	COUNTRY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Workshop proposals for internal democratization from 3 countries: Bolivia, Chile and Dominican Republic	Costa Rica (reprogrammed 2004)												
Preparation Strategic Plan	Costa Rica												
Pilot Projects	Ecuador (through May 2006)												
Pilot Projects	Dominican Republic (through May 2006)												
Specialized handbooks	Costa Rica												
Web page	Costa Rica												
Workshop on reform of political campaigns. Preparatory activities. Follow-up visit (Reprogrammed 2006)	Chile												