

III. SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATIONS

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Chapter XVIII of the Charter defines the specialized organizations as intergovernmental organizations established by multilateral agreements and having specific functions with respect to technical matters of common interest to the American states. They enjoy the fullest technical autonomy, but are to take into account the recommendations of the General Assembly and the Councils. This chapter summarizes the reports that the following specialized organizations presented pursuant to Articles 127 and 91.f of the Charter:

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO);
The Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN);
The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM);
The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH);
The Inter-American Indian Institute (III); and
The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Established in 1902 by the Second International Conference of American States, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is the inter-American system's specialized organization in health matters and the World Health Organization's Regional Office for the Americas (AMRO/WHO). Its mission is to "lead strategic collaborative efforts among Member States and other partners to promote equity in health, to combat disease, and to improve the quality of, and lengthen the lives of the peoples of the Americas." In its efforts to improve health, PAHO targets society's most vulnerable sectors: mothers and children, workers, the poor, the elderly, refugees, and displaced persons. Its priorities are equity for those who do not have access to health and, in keeping with the principles of Pan Americanism, it urges the countries to work together on matters of common concern.

Health, an Essential Component of the Development Goals Spelled Out in the Millennium Declaration

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as articulated in the Millennium Declaration, reflect an unprecedented political consensus on the state of the world and its outlook for the future. The Declaration sets out measurable goals, to be accomplished within specific timeframes, and thus further the advancement of humanity. These goals can be achieved if we are able to make them the standard behind which all persons, groups, families, communities, and nations rally; the dream and the aspiration they all share; and the right to which they can all lay claim. They can be achieved if we become energized and pledge our individual and collective efforts to them, with our diverse languages, beliefs, and realities. They can be achieved if we are able to regenerate trust, understanding, and solidarity among nations.

Three of the eight Millennium Development Goals refer specifically to health issues: reduce child mortality; improve maternal health, and control the spread of HIV/AIDS virus, malaria, and other infectious diseases. Seven of the 18 targets set for measuring accomplishment of the MDGs are the health sector's direct responsibility: malnutrition, child mortality, maternal mortality, the HIV/AIDS virus, malaria and other infectious diseases, safe drinking water, and essential drugs. The priority attached to health underscores the new consensus that health is not merely the result of development, but also a factor that is also critical and essential to achieving it.

Some of the major obstacles that the countries of the Americas face in striving to achieve the MDGs are within the health area. Given the strong and dynamic correlation between poverty and health, one of the challenges for achieving the Millennium Development Goals is to halve poverty and hunger by the year 2015. The challenge of reducing inequalities is a particularly imposing one for the Americas. Current projections for the region as a whole suggest that if the present trend continues, the goals set for infant and maternal mortality cannot be achieved, although the situation varies considerably from one country to another and among different population groups. The projected indicators also differ considerably.

PAHO is currently engaged in a major effort to mainstream the MDGs into its work program, at both the country and regional levels, and to strengthen the support provided to the countries to help them achieve the agreed upon goals. The following are among the strategic approaches that PAHO has adopted to achieve the millennium development goals in the Americas:

Advocacy to publicize the health priorities set by the MDGs, using a sweeping combination of policy dialogue, partnerships, and intersectoral action. The policy dialogue is intended to step up activity in the area of national health and sanitation development, to tackle those issues that are not well funded in the

health systems of the priority countries, and to ensure social protection on health matters at the regional and local levels and thus advance the MDGs by means of results-oriented health policy initiatives. Another ingredient is technical cooperation to help the countries identify and put into practice national strategies for achieving the health-related MDGs; mainstreaming to combine the work associated with the MDGs with other strategic activities in the area of health development, such as participation in the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, efforts at subregional integration, and identification of regional public assets. Strategic partnerships are a means to promote alliances and increase cooperation with other partners, especially lawmakers, ministers of finance and planning, coordinators of development and social policy, and other institutions and actors that play a pivotal role in executing and achieving the MDGs at the country level. Decision-making power to encourage health education for the public and decision-making power for the communities through robust civil society participation at all levels will help achieve the MDGs, although special care must be taken to include ethnic groups, indigenous populations, and women. Monitoring will better gauge progress using health data segregated by level, region, subregion, and country. Research will strengthen the scientific evidence, generate new information, and look at the synergy between health and development.

All levels of the Organization work together on these strategies: the offices in each country, the Pan American Centers, and the regional headquarters. PAHO works with the governments, the contact institutions, and the national authorities. A strategic team has been created within PAHO to coordinate the MDG-related activities. The team has a senior policy advisor and a working group representing the key areas for achieving the MDGs. The topic has come up at the meetings of PAHO's governing bodies and in the meetings of the regional and subregional managers. Also, a number of areas have steered their activities more in the direction of achieving the MDGs, among them the following: the Family and Community Health Area; the new working group on primary health care; and the Sustainable Development and Health Area. Also, the experience gained and the infrastructure acquired in preparing basic health data are being harnessed to help gather the indicators for the health-related MDGs.

PAHO is working closely with the United Nations system toward establishment of national health policies involving varied interinstitutional and intersectoral participation. This collaboration includes participation in planning and formulating the national development policy frameworks defined by the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, under the system of Common Country Assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy documents. With the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) coordinating, a report is being prepared on the status of the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will appear in the document titled Social Panorama, which ECLAC will publish. This document will be presented in April 2005 and will be input for the United Nations Secretary-General's report on accomplishment of the MDGs.

The MDGs have also been discussed in other forums whose purpose is to achieve subregional integration, such as the Meeting of the Health Sector of Central America and the Dominican Republic (RESSCAD), the Meeting of the Ministers of Health of the Andean Region, the Meeting of the Ministers of Health of MERCOSUR and of South America, and the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development. A joint initiative with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and PAHO also figures on the Shared Agenda.

Country-Centered Technical Cooperation

PAHO's current commitment is to ensuring the presence of an organizational structure and strengthening that presence in each country, so that the optimum and highest-quality technical cooperation can be assured. The idea is not just to help achieve national and regional health goals, but also to build up each and every country's capacity to influence and use to maximum advantage the flow of international

cooperation in the area of health. Another objective is to make health one of the preeminent concerns of every national development plan and to make certain that each country's interests and perspectives are reflected on the world development agenda.

The following lines of activity have been mapped out and launched to achieve these ends: (a) a redefinition of the strategy of cooperation with the countries, with emphasis on articulating the business of the Organization's three levels; (b) strengthening the Organization's presence in the countries by transferring resources from PAHO headquarters or from the centers to the countries; and (c) prioritizing the performance of the country teams.

PAHO's Technical Cooperation Priorities

PAHO bases its technical cooperation on three major strategic lines: (1) the Unfinished Agenda in Public Health; (2) protecting the gains achieved, and (3) a response to new and old challenges.

Unfinished Agenda in Public Health

While the Americas Region is proud of the gains that most countries have made in the area of health, it is also true that in some areas significant gaps persist between countries and even within the same country. These gaps merely point up the enormous social deficit that has accumulated in the region. The health indicators in some countries and population groups lag well behind the averages for the region. This is where the unfinished agenda begins. That unfinished agenda is the expression of the political determination of PAHO and its Member States to focus their attention on a set of priority objectives, among which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are critical. It reflects the principles of equity and respect for the individual and collective right to decent living conditions, as embodied in the slogan "Health for All."

PAHO is working on the following unfinished agenda objectives: (a) the fight against extreme poverty and hunger; (b) reducing mortality among children under age 5; (c) the Indigenous Peoples' Health Initiative; and (d) improving maternal health. For the last of these objectives, the Office is employing the new Regional Strategy for Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, approved by the 26th Pan American Sanitary Conference, inasmuch as both the Conference and the working group on maternal mortality of the Regional Interinstitutional Coordinating Committee recommended that the medium-term regional target be to reduce the maternal mortality rate to less than 100 per 100,000 live births; (e) PAHO has decided to target some of the neglected diseases in the most neglected population groups, such as lymphatic filariasis, geohelminths, schistosomiasis, and onchocerciasis (river blindness), because these are eradicable diseases. Other neglected diseases and public health problems, such as louse-borne diseases and typhus, will be added shortly in a joint undertaking and horizontal cooperation; (f) the fight against HIV/AIDS, driven by the political commitment made at the Special Summit of the Americas, in Monterrey in January 2004, to guarantee antiretroviral treatment for everyone who needs it as soon as possible, and for at least 600,000 by 2005. PAHO is working with all the Member States. All signs seem to indicate that the 2005 goal will have been accomplished by the time the Fourth Summit of the Americas takes place in November 2005. Thanks to an extraordinary mobilization of human and financial resources—including those from the Global Fund to Combat HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria—all the countries have been able to considerably scale up the coverage of antiretroviral treatment since January 2004, when the Nuevo León commitment was announced. However, to achieve the goal of universal coverage, an even greater effort will be needed. To that end, PAHO is stepping up its work and improving its effectiveness through the WHO's "Treat 3 Million by 2005" Initiative in all the countries, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean. It is working especially hard to get comprehensive care and treatment plans put together and into practice and thus strengthen the health sector's response to the epidemic.

Protecting the Gains Achieved

The economic and political crises besetting a number of countries in the region have pointed up how fragile and vulnerable the health systems are, and have brought home the need to continue to take care to keep up the important advances achieved in the area of health. The support that PAHO provided to the countries to preserve the strides made in the following fields is noteworthy:

a. Reducing morbidity from tuberculosis. Significant gains have been made in controlling tuberculosis using the DOTS (Directly Observed Therapy, Short-Course) Strategy, now being used in 25 countries with varying degrees of coverage. In the last decade, the number of cases of tuberculosis has stabilized, and shows a slight downturn between 1999 and 2002. The Americas Region was the most successful at detecting cases, with a general rate of positive bacilloscopy detection of over 70 percent, as compared to the global average of 44 percent. The treatment success rate is 81 percent in areas where the DOTS strategy is used, as opposed to 58 percent where it is not.

b. Bolstering and expanding vaccination programs. PAHO has provided its support for suitable control, elimination, and eradication of diseases that can be eradicated through inoculation, with the accent on strategies for immunization and promoting prevention. The annual vaccination week in the Americas was adopted by all the countries of the region in 2004. In the area of new vaccines, the introduction of vaccines against *Haemophilus influenzae* type b and hepatitis B in 34 and 33 countries, respectively, has served as an incentive to bolster services that provide routine vaccination and to evaluate the possibility of other vaccines as they appear. In 2003, epidemiological surveillance standards were adopted for the rotaviruses, which are the cause of most cases of severe gastroenteritis in nursing babies. PAHO formed a technical working group to help speed introduction of a vaccine against the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) which has the potential to reduce the incidence of cervicouterine cancer, one of the principal causes of death among women in the Americas.

c. Foot-and-mouth disease. In 2004, programs continued to be carried out to prevent, control, and eradicate foot-and-mouth disease, under the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease. The activities encompassed a total of 5.3 million head of livestock: 325 million cattle; 52 million sheep; 17 million goats; 40 million pigs; and 7.3 million llamas, alpacas, and vicunas.

d. Mitigating the effects of emergencies and disasters. The Office is promoting the development of national and intersectoral capacities to reduce the health sector's vulnerability to disasters. An OAS/IDB/PAHO partnership continued to monitor the regional disasters program. The health sector was particularly active during the 2004 hurricane season, especially in the Caribbean.

e. Sustainable development and environment. In 2003, PAHO conducted a regional assessment of solid waste management services in Latin America and the Caribbean. This assessment underscored how important proper solid waste management is to health. This is a crisis in many countries, and one of the greatest challenges for the authorities, service providers, and the community.

f. The Regional Core Health Data Initiative. The Initiative has been introduced in 30 Member States of the region. At the present time, the system features a minimum set of 109 indicators compiled on an annual basis, depicting the health situation and trends in each country. This initiative was adopted in response to the mandates from the Member States and to answer PAHO's various monitoring and surveillance needs.

g. Monitoring and analysis of inequities in health. Considerable capacities have been built up for measurement of inequities in terms of socioeconomic correlations—poverty, gender, ethnicity, geographic

location, education, employment, housing, and sanitation—and their implications, including their implications for health.

h. Virtual health library. The Office's featured activities in this area have been to build, in partnership with the countries, the Virtual Health Library (<http://cys.bvsalud.org>) and the network of information sources for science, technology, and innovation management, called the SCienTI Network.

i. Information and knowledge management. The purpose here is to ensure that the policies, procedures, technology, and human resources are orchestrated and administered in such a way that they help to generate knowledge and the use and dissemination of information.

Response to New and Old Challenges

The twenty-first century started with new diseases and new challenges, such as those posed by the threats of international and national terrorism. PAHO's technical capacity has had to be harnessed to help meet these challenges. However, old challenges persist and continue to be a source of grave concern, such as the use of tobacco, violence, access to medicines, problems related to nutrition and food security, and all the factors that cause poverty and its effects on health. Some examples of the work PAHO is doing in these areas are described below:

a. Violence. In response to concerns over the adverse effect that violence has on Latin America and the Caribbean, the Inter-American Coalition for the Prevention of Violence (IACPV) was formed. Coordinated by PAHO, the coalition brings together the OAS, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States Agency for International Development, and UNESCO. It continues to coordinate activities and exchanges of information. The Coalition also conducts specific projects, one of which is being conducted in conjunction with the Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus (FEMICA). That project is currently monitoring violence at the municipal level and supports the Municipal Crime Observatories, thus helping to identify risks and craft municipal violence-prevention plans. Another project seeks to promote initiatives aimed at preventing youth gang violence in Central America. A Conference on "Voices from the Field: Local Initiatives and New Research on Central American Youth Gang Violence" was held at PAHO's main headquarters on February 23, 2005. Preparations are currently under way to launch another project, this one to enhance the role that the mass media play in preventing violence.

b. Tobacco. The Member States took a major step forward when the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control took effect on February 27, just two years after its adoption at the World Health Assembly. The purpose of the Convention is to save the millions of lives lost as a result of tobacco use, and it is the first global convention negotiated under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO) and its Member States. The Convention requires, *inter alia*, that the ratifying countries impose restrictions on tobacco advertising, sponsorship, and promotion; that they adopt new packaging and labeling for tobacco products; that they establish controls to monitor for clean air in interior places; and that they strengthen laws to vigorously combat the trade in contraband and counterfeit cigarettes. In our Hemisphere, Canada, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago have already ratified the Convention. The congresses and senates of Chile and Venezuela have already endorsed the Convention and will hopefully soon be ratifying it. Important strides have also been made in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Honduras, the United States, and Uruguay to protect the public from secondhand smoke.

c. Diet-caused non-communicable diseases. These include diabetes, various cardio-vascular problems, obesity, and others. Today they account for 60 percent of the causes of death in the Americas and mainly affect health among low-income sectors. These diet-related diseases carry enormous economic costs for

the families and society as a whole. PAHO is working with the rest of the WHO and the Member States to promote the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2004.

d. Access to medicines. Working with the WHO and other United Nations agencies, PAHO is following the free trade agreements currently under discussion, negotiation, or implementation, and is monitoring the impact those agreements have on public health, especially access to medicines. These agreements—whether bilateral, regional, or global—can have a very significant potential impact on access to medicines, especially when the terms approved are much more restrictive than those already approved under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of the World Trade Organization. More restrictive terms could mean that large sectors of our populations are effectively denied access to new medicines. PAHO is encouraging the ministers of health to take active part in the discussion rounds so that they can get the public health angle onto the table. It is also encouraging the countries to include all the flexibilities provided for under the TRIPS Agreement in their own regulations in order to protect public health interests in their respective national health systems.

Support for Some Global and Hemispheric Initiatives

International Health Regulations

The International Health Regulations are the only set of binding regulations for maximum security against the international spread of diseases. The 48th World Health Assembly requested revision of the Regulations. In January 2004, an initial draft of the Regulations was circulated, which was based on internal consultations and talks with external partners and with the Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO). Between March and July 2004, regional and subregional consultation meetings were held in the WHO's six regions. The observations made during those consultations were used to draft the proposed revision of the International Health Regulations, which was circulated among the Member States in October 2004. Then, the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Revision of the International Health Regulations convened in Geneva, from February 21 to 26, 2005, with 153 Member States in attendance. The Group's deliberations will continue in May 2005. Expectations are that the final document endorsed by the Intergovernmental Working Group will be presented to the 58th World Health Assembly, in the week of May 16, 2005, for approval.

Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG)

PAHO continued to serve as the organization specializing in health in the Joint Working Group. In that capacity, it participated in the Group's 2004 meetings and in the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in January 2004. PAHO advised on health-related issues when the Declaration of Nuevo León was drafted. That Declaration was approved at that Special Summit. As stated previously, PAHO is working to comply with the mandate on scaling up antiretroviral treatment in the region, in partnership with the Member States and the agencies that cosponsor UNAIDS. It is also assisting the countries with crafting and conducting programs to take on emerging and reemerging diseases like malaria, dengue, yellow fever, tuberculosis, Chagas disease, and others, and on the issues to improve social protection in order to provide quality services to everyone in the Hemisphere. PAHO also participated in the March 2005 meeting of the SIRG, where it described the progress made toward full compliance with the health mandates of the Summits of the Americas. In the months ahead, it will present its proposals on the subject of work and health for the Mar del Plata Summit in November 2005.

Coordination with the Inter-American System

The work done in coordination with the inter-American system on a variety of issues has been a constant in PAHO's business. The following are some examples: the work done with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) on the themes of gender and health and coordination of preparations for World Health Day 2005 where, under the slogan "Make Every Mother and Child Count," special attention will be devoted to issues of maternal-child care. On health and the environment, PAHO has been coordinating with the OAS and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to prepare for the Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment, to be held in Mar del Plata in June 2005.

PAHO is also collaborating with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to promote and protect the human rights of persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, indigenous peoples, and the reorganization of mental health services to conform to international and regional human rights standards. The cooperation is broad-based and includes participation in hearings to discuss pressing issues, formulation of technical opinions, support for implementation of preventive measures to protect persons with illnesses or disabilities, the development of new regional standards in public health and human rights, visits to psychiatric or public health institutions, training workshops, and so on.

PAHO and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) continue to carry out the agreement for joint cooperation. In that framework, the Inter-American Conference on Foot-and-Mouth Disease was held, as was a forum on bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE) (Houston, Texas, March 2004). Out of these meetings came recommendations for joint measures that could be undertaken to achieve the goal of eradicating foot-and-mouth disease and preventing the spread of BSE in the Hemisphere. In the area of education and training, IICA and PAHO have exchanged training packages and plan to work together to develop and put into practice manuals on best practices and on development of a distance-education program and participation in the Global Development Learning Network, which IICA has developed with World Bank support. Finally, PAHO supported IICA with developing indicators to monitor the AGRO 2015 Plan pursuant to the mandates from the Summit of the Americas in this area.

A letter of agreement was signed with the IDB for execution of a project on Analysis of the State of Veterinary Services in Latin America and the Caribbean and preparation of a project proposal for training in program management, with the emphasis on foot-and-mouth disease. PAHO also continued to coordinate on the Shared Health Agenda, in which the World Bank is also playing a role.

On labor-related issues, PAHO has teamed up with the OAS and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to work on topics related to the health of workers in the Americas. Following up on the mandates from the Third Summit of the Americas, PAHO was instrumental in organizing the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. The results of the conference were presented at the 45th Session of PAHO's Directing Council, held in September 2004. The Directing Council requested that the Pan American Sanitary Bureau continue to examine the OAS-sponsored strategic alliance between the health and labor sectors. It also proposed that at the preparation meeting of the Ministers of Health and Environment of the Fourth Summit of the Americas—which is scheduled for Argentina in June 2005—a special session be included with the Presidents pro tempore of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor to spell out what the labor, environment, and education sectors have to do to improve working conditions and employment, particularly in the health sector.

With support from the European Union, PAHO partnered with the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) to work on a data system on workers' health. Work was also done on the subject of corporate social responsibility.

Working with the OAS' Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), PAHO collaborated on the publication, in Spanish, of the book titled "*Neurociencia del consumo y dependencia de sustancias psicoactivas*" and on disseminating the book to Spanish-speaking audiences. This book provides crucial evidence of the nature of the drug problem and effective treatment methods, all couched in terms of public health.

PAHO worked closely with the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission on the use of information and communications technologies applied to the health area. A document on the state of these health technologies in the Americas was published in conjunction with the International Telecommunication Union.

The 45th Directing Council of PAHO

The Directing Council met in Washington, D.C., from September 27 to October 1, 2004, to discuss the main health problems and challenges in the region. The following were some of the topics discussed: the Millennium Development Goals and Health Targets, the Observatory of Human Resources in Health, Access to Medicines, Scaling-Up Treatment within a Comprehensive Response to HIV/AIDS, International Health Regulations: Perspectives from the Region of the Americas, WHO's 11th General Program of Work, and the Ten-Year Evaluation of the Regional Core Data in Health Initiative. The report of the XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor was presented, as was the Report on Reducing the Impact of Disasters on Health Facilities. Three member states were elected to PAHO's Executive Committee with expiration of the terms of the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Peru. The new members of the Executive Committee are Canada, Cuba, and Venezuela.

INTER-AMERICAN CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE

The Inter-American Children's Institute is a specialized organization that helps create public policy on children's behalf in the Americas, promote the relationship between the state and civil society, and cultivate a critical awareness of the problems affecting children in the Hemisphere. All the member states are represented on its Directing Council.

During this reporting period, execution of the Strategic Plan 2000-2004 was completed. Perhaps the most important event in the policy area was the holding of the XIX Pan American Child Congress, whose main theme was "The Family: Basis for the Integral Development of Children and Adolescents." The meeting brought together over 550 participants from the areas of policy, government, academia, and NGOs in the member states.

At the technical level, the legal prototypes on child labor, sexual exploitation of children, disability, drug abuse prevention, and the rights of indigenous children were completed. Work got under way to prepare the prototype on the criminal responsibility of adolescents and a technical paper was presented on the meaning of the best interests of the child and adolescent.

As for communications, the Institute's web portal has seen a large increase in the number of visits. The program of videos promoting children's rights and the small, illustrated children's books have been very well received among bodies governing child affairs and in the media.

The most important activities can be summarized as follows:

- II Training Workshop: Regional Site Child Action Coordination, held in Costa Rica.
- Workshop on the Systematization of Reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, organized in conjunction with "Save the Children Sweden." The workshop was held twice in Lima, Santo Domingo, and Montevideo, and was attended by representatives of 18 countries.
- General Cooperation Agreement signed with the Embassy of the United States in Uruguay to conduct a project on combating sexual exploitation, Internet child pornography, and trafficking in children, targeted at the countries of MERCOSUR, plus Bolivia and Chile. This Agreement included the holding of a planning workshop and a regional conference. The IIN presented a report on the research and a proposal for legal provisions in this area.
- Activities conducted jointly with the Office for the Promotion of Democracy (OPD), including production of the video on the Inter-American Democratic Charter and an illustrated children's book on the same subject.
- First Subregional Inter-parliamentary Workshop on Child Legislation and Child Labor in Central America, with the cooperation of the Canadian International Development Agency and the participation of 18 members of parliament from Central America.
- Tertiary education program with the Latin American Human Economics Center, CLAEH, in Uruguay, including master's degrees on public policy in various child-related areas, with face-to-face and distance curricular activities through the Internet.

- Meeting for Follow-up of the Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Costa Rica with the participation of UNICEF, ECPAT International, and IPEC/ILO.
- Meeting for congressmen from all the Uruguayan political parties on children and youth in Uruguay, having as a central theme "Elections 2004 – A political approach to reality and actions related to children and youth in Uruguay."
- Subregional Public Hearing on "The Situation of Abandoned Children and the Adoption System," organized by the IIN, the Ministry for Women and Social Development (MIMDES), and the Peruvian Congress, with the participation of Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia.
- Workshop on the "Institutional Strengthening" of the National Secretariat for Children of Paraguay.
- XV Regional Workshop of the Inter-American Child and Family Information Network, RIIN, held in Solís, Uruguay.
- Subregional Workshop on Public Policies for the Educational and Social Inclusion of Children with Different Capabilities, which took place in Lima with the participation of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela.
- Eloísa de Lorenzop Prize, awarded in Mexico in conjunction with the Beach Center of Kansas University, on the occasion of the 79th Meeting of the Directing Council of the IIN.
- Launch of the Portuguese version of the IIN-produced promotional videos, with the presence of the President of Brazil, the Honorable Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and featuring a performance by the well-known singer and Brazil's current Minister of Culture, Gilberto Gil.

INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN

Created by the Sixth International Conference of American States (Havana, 1928), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) is the OAS' advisory body on gender-related issues in the Hemisphere. Its purpose is to promote and protect the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of women. It reports to the governments on the progress accomplished in these areas and the problems that need to be addressed, and suggests solutions. The Commission has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

In 2004, the CIM's activities were steered by the Biennial Work Plan of the CIM 2002-2004, the mandates approved at the Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, the mandates from the OAS General Assembly at its thirty-fourth regular session, and those from the Summits of the Americas. Greater emphasis was placed on implementing the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (PIA).

Second Meeting of Ministers or of the Highest-Ranking Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women in the Member States: April 21 to 23, 2004 – REMIM-II

In compliance with General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1941 (XXXIII-O/03), "Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality," the Secretary General convened REMIM-II, which was attended by the Ministers of Women's Affairs, one Minister on Social Change, ambassadors, principal delegates to the CIM, and others.

The matters that the ministers addressed were as follows: women, free trade and economic empowerment: the impact of free trade agreements on women's economic empowerment; and gender mainstreaming and women's participation in free trade processes. The meeting also examined the results of the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Mexico, and gender equity and equality at the Fourth Summit of the Americas and proposals for including the gender perspective in its Declaration and Plan of Action. The delegations also reported on best practices developed for implementation of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (PIA) in the areas of labor, education, and justice.

Incorporation of the gender perspective in ministerial meetings: the SEPIA Process

Working in cooperation with the OAS Office of Education, Science and Technology, with the Gender Advisory Board of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and with other experts, in 2004 the Commission put together recommendations on how to incorporate the gender perspective into the programs and policies of the ministries of science and technology. The resulting document, "Recommendations for Integrating a Gender Perspective in Science and Technology Policies and Programs in the Americas," was incorporated into the Plan of Action of the First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology within the Framework of CIDI, held in Lima, Peru, on November 11 and 12, 2004.

In promoting the SEPIA-II process—Gender and Justice, the Executive Secretariat gave a presentation at the Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas, REMJA-V, held in April 2004, on the issues of violence against women and trafficking in persons. As a consequence, the conclusions and recommendations of REMJA-V cited violence against women, trafficking in persons, and gender and justice as being among the most important concerns.

Human rights and the eradication of violence against women

The CIM continued to press for ratification of the Convention of Belém do Pará by all the member states. That Convention has now been ratified by 31 of the 34 member states. In keeping with the mandate from the Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates of the CIM [CIM/RES. 224 (XXXI-O/02)], endorsed by the OAS General Assembly [AG/RES. 1942 (XXXIII-O/03)], the CIM did the *travaux préparatoires* for a mechanism for follow-up of the Convention of Belém do Pará. In consultation with regional and international organizations and civil society, it drafted a working paper proposing the creation of such a mechanism. In July 2004, a meeting of experts was held to discuss and make recommendations on the mechanism. A Conference of States Parties, held on October 26, 2004, approved the Statute of the Mechanism to Follow Up on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, “Convention of Belém do Pará.”

The CIM participated in a number of forums to promote the Convention’s implementation. They included the interagency meeting of experts on the “key components of laws and policies about gender violence” and an interagency meeting on “Developing Coordinated Approaches to Eradicating Gender-based Violence in the Caribbean,” held in Barbados in May 2004 to monitor the prevailing situation of violence against women in that region. The model legislation designed at these meetings will be used in pilot projects in the region.

The CIM also cosponsored a seminar on “domestic violence from the human rights and gender perspective,” organized by the Ministry of the Interior of Uruguay through the Citizen Safety Program and the Office of the Solicitor General of the Ministry of Education and Culture, to train prosecutors and police officials on the problem of violence against women. The CIM also participated in the National Congress to support harmonization of local legislation with international instruments on women's human rights – Effective Exercise of Women’s Rights in Mexico.

Trafficking in persons

In compliance with resolution AG/RES. 2019 (XXXIV-O/04) and with the support of the United States Government, the OAS Coordinator on the subject of trafficking in persons began working in the CIM to coordinate activities in the OAS and in the member states.

The work associated with the project on “International Trafficking in Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation in the Americas” continued. The CIM is working in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with a view to implementing Phase II of the project in Mexico, Bolivia and Belize, which will include research and capacity-building for government officials.

In Mexico, the project is focusing on the 10 border states and features capacity-building courses for government representatives in the areas adjacent to the northern and southern borders and federal officials from the Federal District. A fourth training cycle will be geared toward educating civil society.

On September 11 and 12, 2004, La Paz, Bolivia was the site of the first training seminar for government officials. To reach a wider audience, the seminar was videoconferenced to three more cities: Santa Cruz, Tarija, and Cochabamba. The participants were national officials, civil servants, and immigration service personnel, as well as local officials.

In cooperation with the IOM and local government counterparts in the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia, and Suriname, the CIM and the IOM convoked a series of seminars titled: “Trafficking in Persons: Building a Collaborative Response,” held in each participating country. Through a combination of research, outreach, and training, and capacity-building for

governmental and nongovernmental counterparts, the regional project is working to report on and thus create an awareness of what trafficking in persons is, how extensive a problem it is, and the threats it poses; it is also endeavoring to improve the capacity of governmental and nongovernmental personnel to identify victims of trafficking in persons and to help and protect them, as well as to compile regionally relevant and compatible data; to stimulate cooperation and sharing of statistics within the region; to promote the crafting of policies and laws to prevent trafficking in persons; and to coordinate operational procedures.

Summits of the Americas

In this reporting period, the CIM worked with the Summits of the Americas Secretariat and with the permanent missions to ensure that the gender theme was incorporated in the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in January 2004. In preparation for the forthcoming Summit, which will be held in Argentina in November 2005, the CIM will introduce the recommendations from the Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), which will meet in Argentina in March 2005.

Participation of women in power and decision-making structures

The CIM continues to be a cosponsor and member of the IDB's Program for the Support of Women's Leadership and Representation (PROLEAD), which funds leadership projects in the Hemisphere. In the course of the last year, the CIM, working in cooperation with the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) and PROLEAD, sponsored the seminar for "Training in democratic government for young women leaders from the MERCOSUR region."

Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates of the CIM

The Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates of the CIM was held in Washington, D.C., from October 27 to 29. There, the members of the Executive Committee for the 2004-2006 term were elected and the Biennial Program for that period was approved. Nine resolutions and two declarations were passed. The following are among the priority areas for the new biennium: education; eradication of poverty and discrimination; empowerment of women; violence against women; international trafficking in women and children; and women, peace and security.

PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Established by the Sixth International Conference of American States (Havana, 1928), the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) offers technical cooperation, training at research centers, publications, and technical meetings in the fields of cartography, geography, history, and geophysics. It is headquartered in Mexico City.

Re-engineering of the PAIGH in 2004

Over the course of time, the profound transformation in information and communications technologies has given geographic information a new role in reading the terrain, formulating better development projects, and assisting with decision-making.

At its XXXVII Meeting (Guatemala, 2003) the Directing Council of the PAIGH ordered the “Re-engineering of the General Secretariat of the PAIGH,” including the short-, medium- and long-term measures applied with respect to financial, administrative, organizational (the National Sections included), and scientific matters. The goal is to respond effectively to the current situation, and effectively take on the challenges of the future. One of the strategies to consider makes provision for the profound transformation that the information and communication technologies have undergone and which have given geographic information a new role in interpreting the terrain, formulating better development projects, and assisting in the decision-making process.

The Re-engineering planned is composed of three essential reforms:

1. Financial reform, where the following results from the period stand out: a reduction in payroll costs of 41 percent; a 56.91 percent increase in the resources earmarked; a 15.22 percent drop in administrative expenditures; recovery of 10.16 percent of the amount owed by the member states in the form of pledges, and an 82.49 percent recovery in the Operating Fund;
2. Administrative reform, where the results have included the following: editing and digital production of the institutional publications and virtual distribution; the PAIGH website’s evolution into a regional portal; establishment of the Pan American Network of specialists in PAIGH-related sciences, downsizing the fleet of vehicles, and elimination of the office of Second Vice President of the PAIGH.
3. Technical reform, where the following results stand out: the introduction of new incentives to improve the quality of technical assistance projects and make them Pan American projects; designation of the Office of Science and Technology as liaison for the PAIGH’s technical activities; a new procedure for awarding scholarships; creation of the “Carlos Carvallo” Pan American Cartography Prize; and start-up of the following projects: establishment of the hemispheric initiative in the field of geographic data for the integral development of the Americas, development of the profile of standards for Latin America and the PAIGH Geportal, virtual map of the Americas, and support for the Regional Infrastructure of Spatial Data.

2004 Technical Cooperation and Assistance Program

As a result of the invitation to submit proposals for 2004 technical assistance projects, the PAIGH provided support to 21 projects for research and training in cartography, geophysics, and history, totaling US\$151,433. This is a 53 percent increase over the amount executed in 2003. The PAIGH also went

ahead with the 2005 call for proposals, which resulted in the approval of assistance for a total 29 projects involving an overall budget of US\$129,680.

The new call for Technical Assistance Projects was revised with a view to encouraging Pan American projects in: (1) spatial data infrastructures, (2) zoning laws, (3) a new global history as applied to America, and (4) response to emergencies caused by natural disasters

Publications 2004

The process of editing, circulating, and selling the PAIGH's occasional and periodical publications is undergoing substantial change. The 2004 budget for publications was US\$46,747, which was used for printing of the PAIGH's journals titled *Revista Cartográfica*, *Revista Geofísica*, *Revista Geográfica*, and *Revista de Arqueología Americana*, and the following special editions: "*Los Caminos de MERCOSUR, Historia Económica Regional*," edited by Hernán Asdrúbal Silva, and "*La Gran Expedición Española de Alejandro Malaspina en América*," edited by Laurio H. Destéfani.

Statutory Meetings and Awards

This year, the PAIGH invited submissions for the "Leopoldo Zea" 2003-2004 Thought of the Americas Award; 18 works were submitted. The winning work was titled "*Las Nuevas Referencias del Pensamiento Crítico en América Latina, Ética y Ampliación de la Sociedad Civil*," by Yamandú Acosta (Uruguay).

The 61st Meeting of Officers was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on August 26 and 27; the Directing Council held its XXVIII session in San José, Costa Rica, on November 15 and 16, 2004.

INTER-AMERICAN INDIAN INSTITUTE

Created by the 1940 Pátzcuaro International Convention, the basic objectives of the Inter-American Indian Institute are to collaborate in the coordination of the member states' indigenous policies and to promote research and training for persons dedicated to indigenous communities' development. It is headquartered in Mexico City.

Payment of the member countries' quotas and other contributions

Quota collections at the end of 2004 looked very much as they had in previous years: a number of countries were current in their contributions; others were paying their contributions gradually, while still others were still in arrears. A grant of US\$11,000 was received from Mrs. Elizabeth Córdova MacArthur, in memory of her parents, the architect Mr. Roberto Córdova Salguero and Mrs. Virginia MacArthur de Córdova. The gift was to go toward a project, which the III will select in due course

Activities carried out

Library: 45,808 publications, 17,688 journal articles, and 4,239 books were catalogued.

Historical Archives: Some 40 percent of the archives prior to 1980 have been organized. Digitalization of the archives continues, in order to protect them physically and then hand over copies to the indigenous peoples.

Academic collaboration: Dr. Laura Giraudó, a historian from the University of Milan, Italy, collaborated on the review and organization of the III's Historical Archives in the period from November 2004 to February 2005.

Internet page: The Institute's web page (www.indigenista.org) went online in late June 2002. By March 31, 2003, it had received 280,000 hits, which downloaded 2.5 gigabytes of information (in Word format). Between the time the page was introduced and December 31, 2003, it received 785,000 hits, which downloaded 8.79 gigabytes of information (in Word format). In 2004, the number of visits continued to climb.

Publications: As of December 31, 2004, two issues of *América Indígena* magazine had been published. Internet users may now view it free of charge at the III's web page. The Institute collaborated with the government of the state of Hidalgo to publish the "*Atlas Musical de los Pueblos Indios del Estado de Hidalgo*," a collection of 3 CDs corresponding to the Nahua, Hñähñú, and Tepehua peoples. Another CD released was Cletus Gregor Barié's *Pueblos indígenas y derechos constitucionales en América Latina: un panorama*, III, the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI), Abya Yala, World Bank (Norwegian Trust Fund), containing the book by the same name published in 2003. Databases containing the laws of the countries studied were added. A total of 16 works were released in CD format, and 26 out-of-print works were republished in CD format.

Organization of events: The III was one of the institutions that issued the invitation for candidates to apply for the course on "Indigenous Rights in Urban Areas and Development," sponsored by the Assembly of Indigenous Migrants in Mexico City, together with the United Nations Development Programme, the Secretariat of Social Development of the Mexico City government, the delegation of the European Commission in Mexico, the National Pedagogical University, the University of Mexico City, the Social Development Institute, the Committee for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, the Ibero-American Fund for Indigenous Development, the Center for Ecumenical Studies, and the University

Program “Mexico Multicultural Nation” of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. The course was held in Mexico City from June 5 to December 11, 2004, with 60 indigenous participants in attendance (www.indigenasdf.org.mx).

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE

Founded in 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the inter-American system's specialized organization for the agricultural sector. It stimulates, promotes, and supports the member states' efforts to further agricultural development and enhance rural life. Its headquarters is in San José, Costa Rica.

In 2004, the Institute carried on its efforts to comply with the mandates from the Third Summit of the Americas, the Monterrey Summit, and the Meetings of Ministers of Agriculture in Bávaro (2001) and Panamá (2003). The Institute has renewed its commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in its areas of competence and specialization.

On the hemispheric scale, IICA supported implementation of the Agro 2003-2015 Plan approved by the Ministers of Agriculture at the Panama Meeting. It also followed execution of that plan in the countries, both through the support provided by its technicians and offices, and by developing a system of indicators that can be used to monitor the progress made and the results accomplished.

In the spirit of accountability, the Institute prepared annual reports that were presented to public and private authorities in each member state and at national workshops, where an exhaustive accounting was given of the activities carried out in 2003, in compliance with the technical cooperation agendas.

Changes in the global and national arenas necessitated review and adjustment of those agendas. The review process has been used to introduce the inter-thematic approach to technical cooperation, in which all thematic areas of the Institute are engaged in the mission of providing a more comprehensive response to the needs of the member states, stakeholders, and partners of the Institute.

IICA continued to promote and develop the "working together" strategy with the entities of the inter-American system (the OAS, PAHO, the IDB, the IACHR), international organizations (the FAO, IFAD, UN-ECLAC), and the cooperation agencies of the developed countries (USAID, IACD, AECI, GTZ, and so on). Interinstitutional cooperation is focused on making agriculture more competitive and alleviating rural poverty.

The opening of the IICA Office in Miami made it possible to scale up the scope of the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Agricultural Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety. Under this program, the Export Platform Program is executed as part of a strategy to gain access for agrifood products to the markets of Canada and the United States. To support agricultural exporters and technical personnel in the member countries, the Institute made a wide array of information available to them, as well as several mechanisms for complying with procedures and requirements for entering these demanding markets.

Convinced of the potential that agricultural trade has to substantially improve living conditions in the countries, IICA continued to support regional and hemispheric integration processes and negotiation of free trade agreements. Specifically, it provided the countries and blocks of countries with support in formulating positions for negotiations, and provided information and conducted analyses of the potential impact of those treaties on the agrifood sector.

In May 2004, the Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology to Increase Agricultural Productivity was held in San José. The Conference, organized by IICA, the Ministries of Agriculture and Science and Technology of Costa Rica, and the Departments of State and Agriculture of the United States, was attended by representatives from Central America, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. At the Conference the discussions focused on the development of agrobiotechnologies and their socioeconomic impact, and the importance of promoting the transformation of

agriculture based on knowledge, technological development, and international competition. The conclusions reached at that event will serve as the basis for the design of national and regional technological innovation policies.

In the area of agricultural health and food safety, the second stage of the Initiative for the Countries of the Americas to Strengthen Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures within the framework of the WTO was carried out, which qualitatively increased the American countries' participation on the WTO/SPS Committee and increased their presence to almost 100 percent. The Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument was prepared in partnership with the OIE and can be used to describe the performance of national veterinary services and determine the strategy and joint measures needed to strengthen them. The PVS has already been successfully applied in Central America.

In support of the strengthening of rural communities, IICA focused its activities on promoting the territorial approach to rural development, in every possible inter-American and international forum. As concerns direct cooperation, the Institute supported the formulation of rural development strategies, policies, and programs consistent with that approach and assisted in the design and strengthening of the necessary institutional frameworks. IICA also continued the joint effort being carried out with the key partners of the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development.

As part of the strategy for repositioning IICA technically, a series of technical forums were started in 2004. The forums, whose purpose is to provide an opportunity to share views on issues of critical importance to agriculture and rural life, are intended to yield ideas and approaches that can be applied in IICA's technical cooperation activities and to generate information of use to decision-makers. Six technical forums were held in 2004, featuring speakers who were high-level technicians and policy makers, including the former Ministers of Agriculture of Canada and Costa Rica.

The Institute also continued to promote training of the human resources needed to drive the development of competitive agriculture and rural well-being. Modern communications technologies were adopted and collaborative mechanisms were developed, including the GDLNA, established by the World Bank.

Lastly, IICA has undertaken the task of developing and expanding its capabilities and knowledge and information management systems, as a means to strengthen technical cooperation. The aim here is to convert the Institute into the principal reference point for information and knowledge on agriculture and rural life in the Hemisphere. An important step in that direction was the implementation of a number of information technologies, including the new web portal (www.iica.int), whose technical content was updated and expanded continually. In the same vein, the technical information system Infoagro.net was strengthened and the Virtual Private Network and the Intranet were developed as tools to help accomplish the Institute's objectives.