

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."

The 2005 annual report of the Director of PAHO, "Working Together for Health in the Americas" draws attention to the achievements of the member states, partners, and strategic allies that cooperate with PAHO to improve health in the Americas. The achievements are set out in three strategic lines described below and constitute the cooperation framework of PAHO.

Addressing the Unfinished Agenda

To build consensus to reduce maternal mortality in the Americas, an Inter-Institutional Task Force to reduce maternal mortality was created, composed of UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID, the IDB, the World Bank, and other agencies, with PAHO as Technical Secretariat. This task force has provided political momentum to reducing maternal mortality.

In the area of social networks and prevention of child mortality, one achievement has been the Declaration of Tegucigalpa, which recommends the preparation of a regional strategy for neonatal health, the development of which is currently underway.

Building on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Action Plan 2005-2007 has included renewal of Primary Health Care, access to safe drinking water, treatment of solid waste, and improvement of hygiene.

With respect to nutrition and food security in the fight against poverty, efforts are underway in several countries in the Hemisphere to promote initiatives for improvement of food availability, access, and consumption in the poorest municipalities, or areas affected by natural disasters, as well as programs to reduce the root causes of poverty and hunger.

Protecting the Gains Achieved

In 2005, all the countries vaccinated more than 43.7 million people, mainly children; 1.5 million women of fertile age and more than 12 million persons over age 60 were immunized against influenza. Vaccination week in 2006 will be in April, and the above-mentioned figures are expected to be surpassed. July 2005 saw the holding of the Regional Consultation Meeting on Renewal of PHC with a view to the adoption of a policy document, a regional declaration, and a plan of action for the whole of the Americas. The Directing Council of Ministers of Health approved these documents in September 2005.

Response to New Challenges

With respect to the fight against HIV/AIDS, the commitment of the Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, Mexico in 2004, to provide universal treatment to all those who need it, or to at least 600,000 individuals was met and surpassed. In November 2005, the Fourth Summit of the Americas requested PAHO to continue to implement technical cooperation measures in order to attain universal coverage in

the treatment of HIV/AIDS, to work on prevention to reduce the number of cases, and to tackle the problem of discrimination and stigma in the workplace.

The Regional Directors of the United Nations agencies that comprise UNAIDS (RDG HIV/AIDS), carried out activities to bolster the support that those agencies provide to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the fight against HIV/AIDS. These activities included: i) the dialogue with high-ranking representatives of regional agencies in Washington, D.C., to harmonize international cooperation on HIV/AIDS in the Americas. The dialogue, which was held during the annual Meeting of the Regional Directors from March 3 to 4, 2005, at PAHO, included the IDB and its President, Enrique Iglesias, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the US Department of State, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); ii) publication of “What UN Staff in Latin America and the Caribbean Need to Say about the HIV Epidemic”; and iii) the Meeting of the Regional Directors from February 7 to 8, 2006, including a dialogue with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Furthermore, it is recalled that PAHO coordinates this Coalition (IACVP), which in particular targets young people and gangs at the municipal level.

The International Health Regulations (IHR) and Influenza Pandemic, adopted by the 58th World Health Assembly in September 2005, include a code of conduct for public health emergencies of international concern that provide guidelines for the international community. The Fourth Summit of the Americas requested the member states to ratify their accession to the IHR as soon as possible.

In response to the threat of an influenza pandemic, and to the mandate of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, PAHO launched a Strategic and Operational Plan for Responding to Pandemic Influenza. PAHO encouraged and supported the formulation of National Preparedness Plans for an Influenza Pandemic in the Region

Representatives of the World Organization for Animal Health, FAO, IICA and IDB met at PAHO in March 2006 to consider joint measures, in preparation for the possibility of the arrival of the H5N1 avian influenza virus in wild birds or poultry in the Americas.

Since the entry into effect of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), 31 countries have signed the instrument and 16 have ratified it. Under the Smoke-Free Americas Initiative, since July 2005, nine countries in the Americas have ratified the FCTC and another three have approved its ratification.

Joint Efforts

In addition to the above-mentioned three main strategic lines, there are several joint initiatives underway, among which the following are worth mentioning.

More than 65 projects were designed in the areas of sustainable development and inter-sectoral interventions, health information and technology, universal access to health services, risk management, disease control, and family and community health.

PAHO provided assistance to several countries in the wake of emergencies (floods and Hurricane Jeanne, Hurricane Frances, floods in Guyana, Hurricane Katrina, and Hurricane Stan). PAHO also provided assistance following the earthquake in Pakistan and the tsunami in Asia.

PAHO is providing special support to five Key Countries: Bolivia, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

As regards collaboration with the inter-American system, PAHO cooperates with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in the design of standards or guidelines on human rights and health; participates in hearings; and organizes training workshops in member states for public health staff and civil society

With the OAS, PAHO participated in Inter-American Meetings and Conferences of Ministers in other sectors, such as Labor, Education, Environment, and Social Development.

Health figured high on the agenda of the Fourth Summit of the Americas. In the Declaration importance was drawn to strengthening cooperation in the struggle against chronic diseases as well as emerging and re-emerging diseases; PAHO was requested to coordinate regional efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS and avian and human influenza, as well as to encourage development of social security systems and health and safety for workers. PAHO, a member of the Joint Summit Working Group, is assisting with follow-up and implementation of the Summit Declarations and Plans of Action and will provide support for the preparation of future summits.

Achievements

In sum, during the period under review, implementation of the PAHO technical cooperation framework has met expectations with respect to four main outcomes:

In *Addressing the Unfinished Agenda*, the main achievements center on reduction of maternal and child mortality in the region, improvement of health for indigenous peoples and persons living, and efforts to confront illnesses such as Chagas disease, filariasis, schistosomiasis, trachoma and others.

In *Protecting the Gains Achieved*, vaccination coverage has remained high and Vaccination Week has been a success throughout the Americas. Other achievements include the “healthy municipalities and communities strategy,” sub-regional integration processes, the health of border populations, renewal of Primary Health Care, and support for countries with their public health policies.

In terms of *New Challenges*, PAHO has confronted HIV/AIDS infection in the context of the “Treat Three Million by 2005” Initiative, prevention of violence, tobacco control, and public health emergencies (including emerging diseases such as pandemic influenza), and disaster preparedness and response.

PAHO has worked with multiple partners to meet the challenge of *Inter-Institutional Cooperation*, including the member states, the Inter-American system, the United Nations, and other sectors to further strengthen strategic alliances and build consensus to continue to improve Health in the Americas.

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.

In the framework of the Strategic Plan 2005-2008, adopted by the Directing Council, the new Director General of the IIN and his technical team are drawing up a Programmatic Plan and an Operational Plan which will make it possible to achieve the objectives and comply with the guiding principles of the Strategic Plan and to realize its future vision. More detailed information is available on the Website <http://www.iin.oea.org>.

Pursuant to the mandates received from its own bodies and from those of the OAS, the IIN continued to provide the member states with services and products on a regular basis. Moreover, it provided technical assistance for implementation of the National Child System Prototype (SNI Prototype) and the Site for Child-Related Action Coordination (CA Site) and for the establishment of new centers--including Antigua and Barbuda and Jamaica—of the Inter-American Child and Family Information Network (RIIN), and provided technical assistance and training on Regulatory Prototypes and on Prototypes of Targeted Public Policies (PPF). It also submitted the Annual Report to the OAS Secretary General on the Situation of Child Commercial Sexual Exploitation in the Americas.

More than 70 actions were undertaken in the member states and at IIN headquarters in Montevideo in the areas of technical assistance, training, research, meetings planning, dissemination of information, project formulation, and drafting of reports, among which the following are noteworthy:

- Strengthening of systems for the protection of children's human rights with regard to such key aspects as the monitoring of government actions for child protection against sexual violence, the investigation of child trafficking, child pornography on the Internet, the study of regulatory frameworks for such issues, and the implementation of systems for monitoring rights enforcement (Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Panama, and the Dominican Republic);
- Research in Nicaragua and Costa Rica as a supplement to implementation of the "Project on Child Trafficking, Child Pornography on the Internet, and Regulatory Frameworks for MERCOSUR, Bolivia, and Chile";
- Research in Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, and Uruguay on best practices in dealing with delinquent children, with a Workshop-Seminar in Montevideo on "Best Practices in the Implementation of Freedom-Depriving Measures in Latin America";
- Development of a site on the international abduction of children by one of their parents, where member states may obtain information on the topic;
- Launching of a study on "Governance and Children's Rights," which will lay the basis for IIN action under its Strategic Plan 2005-2008;
- Launching of the survey on the "Situation of Children's Human Rights in the Americas," a regional diagnostic assessment of the status of children's rights in order to determine an actual basis and starting point for policy design and program preparation; the study was completed in April 2006.
- Technical cooperation with the Argentine Republic in the context of the National Action Plan on Children's Rights of the National Social Policy Council of the Office of the President of the Republic, aimed at raising awareness of and providing training on the application of various mechanisms for monitoring the enforcement of children's rights through the "Support System for Monitoring Rights Enforcement (SMD)."

The new Director General of the IIN, who took office in December 2005, is taking steps to base the Institute's work on the promotion of good governance and democracy in the context of the Strategic Plan. Thus, one of the IIN's fundamental approaches will be to strengthen working ties with other areas of the OAS specialized in the promotion and protection of human rights in the inter-American system.

Despite the acute institutional financial crisis and the cuts made in technical positions since 2001, the IIN maintains ongoing ties with civil society organizations and is seeking to strengthen relations with authorities responsible for children's affairs in the region. Lastly, by implementing a system for strategic planning and monitoring of its programs and activities, the IIN is developing a sustained strategy with international cooperation that will enable it to strengthen its position as the inter-American system's principal technical body for the promotion and protection of a sector of the population that deserves utmost attention in our region.

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 issues related to women in the Hemisphere.

In 2005, the activities of the Inter-American Commission of Women centered on completing the 2004-2006 Biennial Work Plan, the mandates approved by the XXXII Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, the mandates from the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth regular session, and from the Summits of the Americas. Most of the attention went to the Follow-up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará" (MESECVI) and to the project to fight the crime of trafficking in persons, especially women, adolescents, and children.

Human Rights and the Eradication of Violence against Women

The CIM continued to promote ratification of the Convention of Belém do Pará by all the member states of the OAS. On December 14, 2005, the Government of Jamaica deposited its instrument of ratification, bringing the total number of states parties to 32.

As Secretariat of the Follow-up Mechanism for the Convention of Belém do Pará (MESECVI), CIM requested that the member states appoint an expert to serve on the MESECVI Committee of Experts on Violence (CEVI). In July, it convened the first meeting of the MESECVI Committee of Experts, which was held August 22-24, 2005. Based on the projects prepared by the Secretariat, the CEVI approved the agenda, rules of procedure, questionnaire, time table, and work method. The CIM later asked the member states to designate the competent national authority to serve as liaison with the Secretariat. Once these appointments were received, the first round of evaluation got underway by sending the competent national authorities a copy of the questionnaire by which to evaluate the Convention's implementation. CEVI will examine the responses to the questionnaire at the first meeting of the multilateral evaluation round, scheduled for mid 2006.

To promote the Convention's implementation, the CIM participated in a number of regional forums, which included the International Congress on the Harmonization of Local Law with International Human Rights Instruments on Women's Rights, held in Mexico.

In compliance with resolution AG/RES. 2118 (XXXV-O/05) "Fighting the Crime of Trafficking in Persons," the CIM has continued to work on the fight against the trafficking in persons in the Hemisphere. It organized a number of seminars and consciousness-raising events for government officials, parliamentarians, diplomats, police and immigration officials, NGOs, young people, and the media, which were held in Belize, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru. These activities are intended to build and promote the governmental and nongovernmental capacity to effectively respond to the problems posed by the crime of trafficking in women and children.

The CIM was also instrumental in designing campaigns to prevent the trafficking in persons in Bolivia and Mexico. CIM's partners in these activities were the ministries of foreign affairs, the ministries of labor and employment, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and NGOs.

Various activities were carried out as part of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (PIA), salient among them the Project on the Training Course on Gender, Conflict and Peace-Building. In Lima, Peru, the CIM conducted the "First Training

Course on Gender, Conflict and Peace-Building: Andean Region,” a joint enterprise by the CIM, the Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution and the Inclusive Security program of the Hunt Alternatives Fund. Some 30 women and men from the participating countries, who work on issues related to peace and security, were trained to promote the integration of the gender perspective and women’s participation in the resolution of conflicts and peace-building. A second course will be given in Central America in 2006. The project was funded by Hunt Alternatives Fund—of which Inclusive Security is part—and by the Government of the People’s Republic of China. A second training course will be conducted in Central America in 2006.

Another initiative is the “Project on Integrating the Gender Perspective” within the OAS. Following the success of the 2001-2003 “Project on Integrating the Gender Perspective,” where OAS officials in charge of programs and policies were trained in gender-related issues, the Government of Canada is providing funding for additional training courses. In October, a coordination meeting for Phase II of the project was held. Present at the meeting were officials from various OAS offices. From October 2005 to February 2006, training sessions were planned and conducted with officials from various units of the OAS in charge of programs and policies, in order to train them in gender analysis applicable to their sector. A special informative meeting was also held for directors and unit chiefs.

These courses reinforce the training already received on incorporating a gender perspective, and also address other issues such as harassment and abuse of power. The *training of trainers* module is very important to institutionalize the gender-related training in the OAS, and create an experienced team with technical know-how and the materials needed to duplicate the program.

Summits of the Americas

Complying with resolution CIM/RES.230 (XXXI-O/04) “Gender and Access to Decent Work to Address Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance,” the CIM collaborated with the Secretariat of the Summits Process and the missions of the member states to ensure that incorporation of the gender perspective was included in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the IV Summit of the Americas. To that end, the Secretariat prepared recommendations, which were presented to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) for consideration. The CIM also participated in the Gender Forum of the Americas, held in Buenos Aires in April 2005, on the occasion of the IV Summit. There it presented CIM’s recommendations to the Summit.

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, provides training at research centers, issues publications, and organizes technical meetings in the fields of cartography, geography, history, and geophysics. It is headquartered in Mexico City.

From November 16 through 23, 2005, Caracas, Venezuela was the site of the PAIGH's major quadrennial statutory meetings, thus culminating a special biennium for the PAIGH: re-engineering in 2004 and looking to the future in 2005. With this accomplished, the transition is well underway. The first phase of the re-engineering has been completed and implemented. The Institute's financial and administrative situation has improved and the conditions are present to make the PAIGH the Hemisphere's agency for assisting the member states with their interpretation of their territory, one based on geographic analysis, historical study, and a vision of the Hemisphere.

Progress in the modernization and re-engineering of the PAIGH

The following are some of the basic achievements obtained by modernizing the PAIGH between 2003 and 2005:

- Total labor costs were cut by 37% and payroll costs by 56%;
- 81% of the quota assessments owed by the member states were paid;
- Execution of scientific activities was up by 43.70%;
- The PAIGH's Operating Fund was restored to health, thereby guaranteeing execution of the 2006 technical assistance program;
- The Pan American Professional Network was formed, pulling together specialists in the sciences that are the purview of the PAIGH;
- The PAIGH's publications are now being digitally edited and produced;
- The PAIGH became the regional liaison with the major international organizations in geography and history.

This effort has put the Institute back on a sustainable track. It now operates on the basis of its real income and is deficit-free. The Pan American spirit of the Institute has been revitalized and it has been repositioned as the premier organization in the Hemisphere on the subject of geography, history, and spatial information.

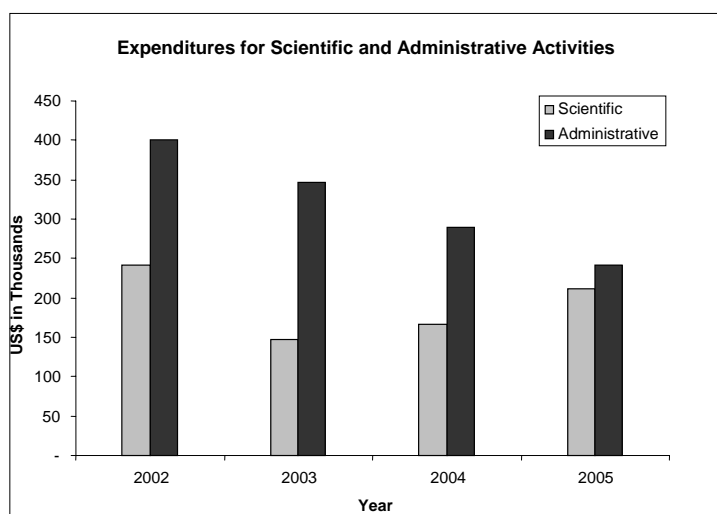
Technical Cooperation and Assistance Program 2005

The technical assistance program executed in 2005 consisted of 28 projects conducted to benefit the member states. They involved execution of a budget of US\$211,000, greater than the amounts executed in recent years. The projects were on cartography, geography, history, and geophysics.

Work progressed on the projects resulting from the 2006 annual call for technical assistance project proposals. The call for proposals resulted in approval of a total of 27 projects with a budget of US\$163,580. Similarly, the 2007 annual call for proposals is currently underway to stimulate and support new Pan American initiatives on the following topics: (1) spatial data infrastructures; (2) land planning; (3) new global history applied to the Americas, and (4) response to emergencies caused by natural disasters.

PAIGH expenditures executed in 2002-2005 for scientific and administrative activities

Activities	2002	%	2003	%	2004	%	2005	%
Scientific	241,296	38	146,831	30	165,845	36	211,000	47
Administrative	401,198	62	345,919	70	290,110	64	241,920	53
Totals	642,494	100	492,750	100	455,855	100	452,920	100



Financial execution for administrative and operational activities, which represented 62% of the spending in 2002, is now 47%, while execution for scientific activities went from 38% to 53% of total spending.

Occasional publications and periodicals in 2005

Dissemination is one of the PAIGH's main functions. In 2005, the PAIGH's General Secretariat worked on producing its publications. It executed a budget of US\$42,615, armed with the new technological tools introduced into the process that have streamlined it and made it more economical and efficient. Issues of the journals *Cartográfica*, *Geofísica*, *Antropología y Arqueología Americana*, *Historia* and *Geografía* were published, making up for the back issues that built up between 2002 and 2004.

Statutory Meetings

In 2005, the PAIGH held its annual and quadrennial statutory meetings in Caracas, Venezuela: 63rd Meeting of Authorities (June 15-17); 64th Meeting of Authorities (November 15 and 20); XX Technical Consultative Meeting on Cartography (November 16 through 18); XVIII Technical Consultative Meeting on Geography (November 16 through 18); XVI Technical Consultative Meeting on History (November 16 through 18); X Technical Consultative Meeting on Geophysics (November 16 through 18); XVIII General Assembly (November 20 to 23)

Prior to these meetings, the General Secretariat complied with the provisions of the 31 resolutions approved at the XXXVIII Meeting of the Directing Council (Costa Rica, 2004). The member states elected the PAIGH's officers for the 2005-2009 period: Oscar Aguilar Bulgarelli (Costa Rica) was elected President, and Santiago Borrero Mutis (Colombia) was elected Secretary General.

The General Secretariat believes that these events were highly relevant. The following was achieved: a solid contribution was made to the Pan American movement, in a context of plurality, diversity, and convergence; progress was achieved in the region's incorporation of spatial data technologies and new strides were made in geographic and historical analysis for the good of the Americas; renewed effort was invested to make the PAIGH more relevant and strengthen it as the intergovernmental organization on geography and history in the Americas.

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.

The following figure prominently among the activities carried out. The Library has catalogued 51,022 publications, 32,057 journal articles, 3,263 articles in books, 165 maps, 774 articles on traditional medicine, and 6,400 books. Some 60% of the Historic Archives predating 1980 has been organized. Digitalization of the Historic Archives continues, with a view to their preservation. Dr. Laura Giraudo, a historian from the University of Milan, Italy, collaborated in reviewing and organizing the Institute's Historic Archives in the period from November 2004 to February 2005.

In 2005, the Institute's Web site received more visits than it did in 2004. Preparations were made for the server shift, and to add more sections to the Web page. Research is currently in progress on "Songs of the Wirrárika on their pilgrimage to Wirikuta," financed with a grant from Mrs. Elizabeth Córdova MacArthur, received in December 2004. The research is 90% complete. The research titled "History of the 1992 Mexican constitutional reform process on indigenous-related issues. Testimony of one of the negotiators," carried out with the cooperation of the Institute of History of the Universidad de Michoacán, México, is 96% complete.

In this reporting period, two students from the Universidad del Mar, Oaxaca, assisted with the work of the Library and Historic Archives. A student from the History School of the Universidad Metropolitana also continued to provide support.

A Financial Viability Commission is in the process of being set up.

Where events are concerned, the "Project Xocotzin. Holy infant 2005. Tohuehueahuilli, the games of our grandparents," promoted by the Secretariat of Public Education, the Government of the Federal District, Mixtín A.C., and the Inter-American Indian Institute was launched in 2005 and conducted in Mexico City.

As for publications, as of December 31, 2005, two issues of the journal *América Indígena's* 2004 series had been published, completing that year's series. Two issues from the 2005 series were also published. These issues were made available at the Institute's Web site, where the user could read them at no cost. Also, 32 works with materials from the Institute's Historic Archives were published on CD.

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE

Founded in 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the specialized agency of the inter-American system for the agricultural sector. It stimulates, promotes, and supports the member states' efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural welfare. It is headquartered in San José, Costa Rica.

IICA partnered with its member states in continuing to promote sustainable agricultural development, food security, and the rural prosperity of the Hemisphere.

In 2005, IICA did more to publicize the findings of its studies on the real importance of agriculture and rural life, which found that both areas are strategic to the countries' integral development. This finding was reaffirmed by the Heads of State and Government at the IV Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina, and by the Ministers of Agriculture of the Hemisphere at the Third Ministerial Meeting "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas," held in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Through its operating units and offices, the Institute was instrumental in helping to implement the mandates from the Summits and the Ministerial Meetings. To that end, it provided technical cooperation to be responsive to the member states' demands, to promote integration processes, to monitor the situation of agriculture and rural life in the Hemisphere, to help build the hemispheric consensus and coordinate strategies and activities with other regional and international agencies.

At the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Ministers acknowledged the Institute's modernization work in recent years, which has paralleled efforts to coordinate agendas and periodically render accounts. At that meeting, Dr. Chelston W. D. Brathwaite was unanimously re-elected as Director General of IICA for the 2006-2010 period.

The strategy "Working Together" was reinforced through joint endeavors with the WTO, ECLAC, the OAS, the FAO, UNESCO, the ILO, the IDB, the World Bank, the CATIE, the CTA, PAHO, USAID, the AECI and the GTZ, among others. These partnerships achieved important results in our programs on rural development, trade negotiations, agricultural health and food safety, information, promotion of agribusiness, technological innovation, investment projects, environmental management and training.

IICA promoted development and enhancement of business skills and knowledge through the Inter-American Program on Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety. This program involved identifying trade opportunities, training, facilitating market access--including markets in the United States, Canada and Europe, development of information systems, support for modernization of markets, and promotion of small rural agro-industry.

On the issue of trade policies and negotiations, the Institute adapted its cooperative activity to conform to the new reality that has emerged from the trade liberalization processes and the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral agreements under which productive activity and agri-commerce are conducted. Significant support continued to be provided to the countries' offices of agricultural trade policy, to help with agritrade negotiations, evaluating the impact of trade agreements on the agricultural and livestock sector, and the important work of administering them.

Along this same line, the horizontal cooperation program titled "Policy and Trade Node: Focal Point Mexico," was implemented, intended to enable a sharing of experiences on these subjects in the Hemisphere. The Institute also served as technical secretariat of a number of regional ministerial forums that endeavored to build and consolidate consensus on policies for agriculture, rural prosperity, and trade.

Other measures geared to improving agricultural competitiveness included promotion of the Commodity Chain Analysis and Action-oriented Dialogue (CADIAC) approach, mainly in countries of the Central American, Andean, and Caribbean regions. The use of this approach has made it easier to build consensus between the actors in the public and private sectors on critical issues affecting the competitiveness of the agri-food chains and implementation of the joint measures needed to deal with those issues.

The Institute began formulating a hemispheric program on agri-biotechnology and biosafety. Experts from the countries and IICA's own technicians determined the priority lines of cooperative endeavor. IICA facilitated effective implementation of the Protocol of Cartagena on Biosafety and strengthened its coordination with the North American Biotechnology Initiative and CAS' Biotechnology Group. A regional analysis was also completed on the institutional standing of the agri-biotechnologies in Latin America and the Caribbean and a specialized Web page on the topic was launched.

In addition, IICA followed the modernization of the countries' agricultural technological innovation systems, preparation of regional studies on the priority issues of the FORAGRO and strengthening of the regional technological innovation cooperative system through the cooperative agricultural research and technology transfer program (PROCI).

With the growing importance of global agricultural trade, cooperation in the area of agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) has been stepped up. One important development has been the use of the tool "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) to evaluate the AHFS services and support their institutional modernization, in order to increase agri-trade.

The Initiative of the Americas for Strengthening Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures was continued, making it possible for representatives of the sanitary and phytosanitary services of the member states to constantly participate in the WTO's SPS Committee.

Aware of the breadth of the topics related to the AHFS, among them the avian flu, the Institute has strengthened its alliances and cooperative ties with other organizations such as the WHO-PAHO, the *Codex Alimentarius*, the OIE and the IPPC.

IICA continued to promote and disseminate the territorial approach to rural development, and to help shape management policies, mechanisms, strategies, and investments that fit that approach. The business of the Institute in this field was more impactful thanks to the synergies resulting from the work done in conjunction with other organizations, both within the framework of the Interagency Rural Development Group and within national inter-agency groups formed to tackle this issue. Among the more important activities in the area of rural development was the added thrust that IICA gave to the strategic axis called BRAMCO, in which rural development institutions from Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia participate. Also a master's degree program in rural development management was launched. Technical assistance was provided, multiple training events were staged, and pilot projects implemented. Technical documents were published and work was done with strategic partners, among them the Rural Policy Research Institute, the Global Environmental Change and Food Systems, the IUCN and the RUTA.

Cultivation of human capital remained a priority in 2005. To address that priority, IICA was supportive of the processes of integrating higher agricultural education, improving the relevance and quality of agricultural and rural education, and certification of agricultural education programs in the Americas. In response to the demands contained in the national and regional agendas, distance education and training courses were prepared on issues vital to agricultural and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

As a corollary to direct technical cooperation, the Institute undertook a sweeping project to compile and organize agricultural and rural information and knowledge to make itself the Hemisphere's principal source and standard in that field. It modernized its portal www.iica.int, improved the technical content, and expanded subscription of the INFOGRA information system (Trade, INFOTEC, Agri-health, Rural Development, PRODAR). The Institute updated the SIDALC, planned the libraries system, improved management of publications, and strengthened the internal data system (Intranet and VPN).

To improve institutional capacities, four high-level technical forums were held and more than 150 documents were published. Staff performance continued to be recognized by rewarding excellence.

At the regional level, the Institute served as technical secretariat of a number of permanent ministerials and helped enable and manage platforms and thematic networks of professionals and technicians, in an effort to build consensus among countries and among regions to piece together the architecture of common agendas.

Finally, IICA's work is reflected in programs, projects and activities in its 34 member states, on such subjects as facilitating competition, trade, promotion of good safety and agricultural health, strengthening of rural communities, hemispheric integration, development of human capital, environmental management and institutional modernization. Preparation, execution, and evaluation of investment projects in agricultural and rural development were ongoing, through inter-thematic teamwork that followed the Institute's strategy.