

ParlAmericas' strengthening the role of parliaments in democratic governance and sustainable development in the Americas

PROJECT DETAILS

Country(ies): Americas
Duration: Jan 2010 – Dec 2014
Budget: CAD \$ 2.7 million
Funder: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
Partner(s): Parliamentary Centre, ParlAmericas
Status: Active

About the Project

In January 2010, the Government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), entered into a Contribution Agreement with ParlAmericas (known as the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas - FIPA until September 2011) and the Parliamentary Centre, for C\$2.7 million in funding over a period of five years.

This funding supports the project *Strengthening the Role of Parliaments in Democratic Governance and Sustainable Development in the Americas*, implemented by ParlAmericas in cooperation with the Parliamentary Centre, which administers the funds and provides expertise.

The project includes training to improve parliamentary practices, and to increase the contribution of parliamentarians in creating hemispheric level policies. It also seeks to boost inter-parliamentary cooperation, and build consensus on key issues for the region, including gender equality.

About ParlAmericas

ParlAmericas is an independent network made up of the national legislatures of governments that are members of the Organization of American States (OAS). ParlAmericas members are committed to promoting parliamentary participation in the inter-American system, and to developing inter-parliamentary dialogue on issues relevant to the hemisphere.

Each year, ParlAmericas holds a Plenary Assembly where parliamentarians discuss current regional subjects such as the role of women in parliament, hemispheric security, and the challenges and opportunities of hemispheric integration and regional economic development.

ParlAmericas is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors composed of Parliamentarians from throughout the hemisphere. The Board of Directors sets the strategic direction of the organization and supports the goals of ParlAmericas through a number of Standing Committees. The Board of Directors also includes a four-person Executive Committee, headed by the ParlAmericas President. The organization's International Secretariat is located in Ottawa, Canada.

ParlAmericas also supports the dynamic Group of Women Parliamentarians. This group meets regularly to participate in workshops on specific issues, and to contribute the perspective of women parliamentarians to the work of the organization.

Accomplishments (as of October 2012)

The project's key accomplishments to date include:

1. A needs assessment study, carried out with the support of FUNPADEM (Foundation for Peace and Democracy), collecting views of Parliamentarians in all member countries (2011)
2. A new website (launched November 2011)
3. The *ParlAmericas Express* triennial newsletter (January 2012, June 2012, October 2012)
4. Contribution to parliamentarians' empowerment:
 - A budget oversight workshop for parliamentarians entitled "Strengthening Parliamentary Budget Oversight", focused on Caribbean countries, organized in conjunction with the CAROSAI, CCAF-FCVI, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the World Bank (Antigua and Barbuda, January 2012)
 - A budget oversight workshop for parliamentarians entitled "Building the capacity of legislatures to monitor public expenditure", focused on Central American countries (Costa Rica, April 2011)
 - A trade workshop for parliamentarians entitled "The Doha Development Round: Challenges and Opportunities for the Region", organized in conjunction with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Senate of Mexico (Mexico, May 2010)
5. Contribution to Inter-American agenda:
 - Observer status during the First Working Meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Commission on Citizen Security and the Administration of Justice (CCSAJ), of the Forum of Presidents of the Legislative Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean Basin (FOPREL, as per its Spanish acronym) (El Salvador, February 2012)
- Presentation at the special meeting of the Permanent Council of the OAS (audience: member states' Ambassadors-Permanent Representatives / topic: democratic and economic future of the Americas) (United States, March 2012)
- Co-coordination of a parliamentary dialogue in the lead-up to the 6th Summit of the Americas, in conjunction with the Andean Parliament (Colombia, April 2012)
- Presentation at the Regional Conference "Open Government and Transparency in Extractive Industries in Latin America and the Caribbean", of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) (Peru, June 2012)
- Participation of a ParlAmericas delegation in the 40th and 41st General Assemblies of the Organization of American States (OAS) (Peru, June 2010; San Salvador, June 2011)
6. Contribution to Inter-Parliamentary dialogue:
 - ParlAmericas Plenary Assemblies, PA7, PA8, PA9 (Mexico, November 2010; Paraguay, September 2011; Panama, August 2012)
 - ParlAmericas Gatherings of the Group of Women Parliamentarians (Ecuador, August 2010; Dominican Republic, June 2011; Chile, May 2012)
 - ParlAmericas EC21 - BD29 (Executive Committee meetings 21-26 and Board of Directors meetings 27-29): January 2010, June 2010, November 2010, February 2011, July 2011, September 2011, February 2012, May 2012 and August 2012 respectively.