

In the Spotlight

IDEA secures Agreement with Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) on behalf of SIAST International Services to conduct study of Indigenous Peoples

Working closely with the Canadian Executive Director to the IADB's office, IDEA, on behalf of the SIAST Ottawa Bureau, prepared a proposal in February 2005 to the Sustainable Development Department of the [Inter-American Development Bank](#). The proposal outlined SIAST's expertise and capacity as well as a methodology to conduct a study on improving indigenous peoples' access post-secondary vocational and technical education and enhance their meaningful involvement in their local social-economy. Following negotiations, the proposal was accepted and an agreement signed in May 2005.

The Project will elaborate recommendations for the design of IADB lending operations to improve opportunities for indigenous peoples to post-secondary vocational and technical education and to incorporate into education programs culturally appropriate post-secondary vocational and technical training for indigenous peoples. Although increasing numbers of indigenous peoples are involved in the labour market, representation in the skilled and professional level of the labour market is limited. While indigenous peoples have undertaken training in basic education, there continues to be limited access to formal vocational and technical training programs.

Specifically, the project will assess the demand and access of indigenous peoples to post-secondary vocational and technical education in **Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala and Nicaragua**, as well as the lessons learned from existing experiences promoting social inclusion, in order to elaborate recommendations for IADB financed post-secondary vocational and technical education projects for indigenous peoples. The project will conduct research into the priorities for planning and implementation of specialized to increase access to post-secondary training. This research will involve exploration of existing programs, including current funding levels, degree of appropriate cultural content, extent of distributed learning opportunities, etc. Data compiled from literature reviews, interviews, and surveys will provide a baseline for identification of recommendations for program development.