

# FOSTERING SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Civil Identity Program supports the strengthening of Civil Registries in the Americas

As of the first semester of 2010, the following results can be highlighted:

**1000 indigenous leaders**

trained to support civil registry campaigns

**in Guatemala**

**1,700 people** registered and

**2,200 civil records** corrected

**in Bolivia**

**4.3 million people** have been registered **in Haiti**

**10,000 children**

received identity documents

**in Peru**

**9 million historic registry entries**

incorporated to the electronic database

**in Paraguay**

**9,500 mothers**

made aware of their right to identity, and

**a system of hospital birth registration**

has been implemented

**in El Salvador**

To achieve these results 4,000 people have been trained, 680 offices computerized, more than 60 registration and awareness campaigns have been implemented, and several research studies, publications, forums and workshops have been developed in themes related to civil registry.

The OAS has also launched several new projects and efforts with Antigua and Barbuda, Colombia, Chile, Dominica, Grenada, Mexico, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Considering that recognition of the identity of persons is one of the means through which observance of the rights to legal personhood, a name, a nationality, civil registration, and family relationships is facilitated, among other rights recognized in international instruments, such as the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and the American Convention on Human

## Universal Civil Identity Program in the Americas

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Rights. The exercise of these rights is essential for participation in a democratic society; Considering also that non-recognition of identity can mean that a person has no legal proof of his or her existence, which makes it difficult to exercise fully his or her civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights; Emphasizing the importance of civil registries as state institutions that can guarantee recognition of the identity of persons and, therefore, the advisability of strengthening them to ensure that their scope is universal, taking into account the rich and varied diversity of cultures; Committed to building just, equitable societies based on the principles of social justice and social inclusion; Resolves to urge the member states to adopt measures, such as the elimination of underregistration, to ensure full recognition of the right to identity, which is essential to the exercise of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights; To request the General Secretariat to draft a proposed Inter-American Program for a Universal Civil Registry



**PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO IDENTITY**



Organization of  
American States



## The Universal Civil Identity Program in the Americas (PUICA in Spanish) supports the strengthening of civil registry institutions in order to promote the right to identity and achieve universal civil registration throughout the region.

The Organization of American States (OAS) has vast experience assisting Latin American and Caribbean countries in issues related to civil registration. The OAS programs and projects aim to support member states in their efforts to reduce poverty and exclusion, and promote democracy. These efforts also include support to strengthen and modernize civil registries. Through its Civil Identity Program, the OAS is helping millions of people to access their right to identity.

During the last 10 years, the OAS has provided technical assistance to several countries in the modernization, integration, accessibility and security processes of their civil registries. The Organization's integral approach links civil identity to the

protection of human rights, the strengthening of democratic governance, and the effective design of social and economic development plans.

The OAS and its member states reaffirmed their commitment to achieving universal civil registration by creating the Inter American Program for Universal Civil Registry and Right to Identity at the OAS General Assembly in 2008. Through this resolution, member states established a foundation for joint cooperation to strengthen civil identity, to promote exchange of practices, to consolidate solid institutions accessible to the population, and to achieve universal birth registration in the Americas by the year 2015.



The OAS provides technical assistance and support to more than 13 member states in Latin America and the Caribbean in their efforts to reduce under-registration and to strengthen civil registry institutions. These initiatives include:

- Mobile civil registration campaigns
- Birth registration systems installed at hospitals
- Public awareness campaigns in health and education facilities
- Civil registry databases
- Reconstruction of destroyed civil registry data
- Virtual forums on civil identity
- Legal frameworks for modernization process
- Mechanisms for the sharing of best practices
- Integration of the civil registry with other state agencies and social programs
- Research and useful studies on civil identity

In its various initiatives, the OAS seeks cooperation from both local institutions and multilateral organizations working in the related field. For example, the OAS has signed cooperation agreements with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Inter American Development Bank (IADB) with the goal to combine efforts in projects related to the promotion of civil identity.

The OAS also works in collaboration with the Latin American and Caribbean Council for Civil Registration, Identification and Vital Statistics (CLARCIEV in Spanish), which convenes all the civil registry and identification institutions in the Region. Through its assistance to CLARCIEV and cooperation with other institutions, the OAS is strengthening the promotion and exchange of best practices between civil registry institutions. A methodology, developed to identify best practices and lessons learned, is being implemented through workshops, handbooks, and technical assistance projects. These efforts seek to promote public policies that facilitate the universality of civil registries.

Civil identity is a fundamental need for all people. It is vital for the protection of human rights, democratic governance and overall development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The OAS, through its support to civil registry institutions, is implementing several projects which have real impact in the life of millions of people in the region. Its strategy is to constantly promote sustainable results in order to achieve lasting progress.

