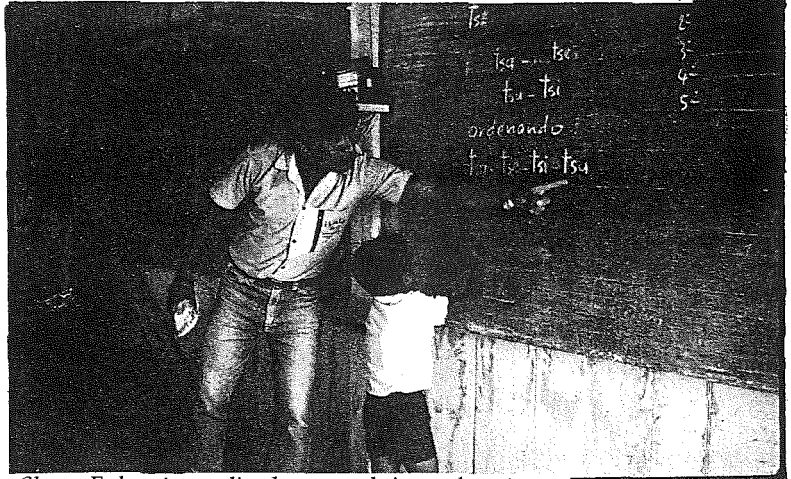


ECUADOR

BILINGUAL EDUCATION—CONAIE MAKES IMPORTANT GAINS



Shuar Federation radio classroom brings education to remote communities during the rainy season.

© 1989 Aguirre/Switkes/AMAZONIA

The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and the Ecuadorian government have signed an agreement for a National Board of Indian Education, which will develop and implement intercultural bilingual education at a national level. The project was announced by Ecuador's Minister of Education and Culture, Arq. Alfredo Viera at the opening of CONAIE's Second National Congress in November.

Under the agreement, CONAIE hopes to use as models those bilingual education programs that have already been developed by regional Indian organizations in Ecuador, with the goal of creating an educational system for Indigenous people that departs from that of the dominant white-mestizo society, and which strengthens the language and cultural identity of Native people. Luis Montaluisa of CONAIE was named the first national director of the Board.

At the Congress, CONAIE delegates stressed the need to maintain independence from the

Ecuadorian government, but to press for solutions in the areas of:

- Legal recognition of CONAIE;
- Defense and definitive legal recognition of the "natural settlements" of Indian nations in Ecuador, and a true application of the agrarian reform program for Indian people of the highlands;
- Recognition of the right of self-determination of Indian peoples;
- Expulsion from Indian areas of "pernicious and harmful" foreign religious sects, including the Summer Linguistic Institute (ILV), World Vision, and the Mormons, as well as political groups like Tradition, Family, and Property;
- Discussion of constitutional reforms and a new project of laws concerning Indigenous Nationalities;
- "Pushing ahead nationally and internationally the campaign against the celebration of the 500 Years of the invasion of the American continent."

CONAIE elected a new Board of Directors, including Cristobal Tapuy, President and Luis Alberto Macas, Vice President.