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MONTHLY REPORT - DECEMBER 1984

CHAPARE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
EXPERIENCE, INCORPORATED

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I. Activities

A. Administrative and Institutional

The social/political climate in the Chapare was tense during the first half of December, but seemed to ease toward the end of the month. We are awaiting the results of a December 29 campesino meeting at which was discussed demands that DIRECO be disbanded and that the Leopardos not be sent back to the Chapare.

USAID/Bolivia made funds available to IBTA/Chapare on December 11. An account was established at Banco de Cochabamba which has a branch office in Villa Tunari, Chapare. This account was later changed to the Banco Central de Bolivia in conformance with GOB regulations.

IBTA/Chapare personnel were paid their AID and GOB salaries for the months of September, October, November and December.

IBTA/Chapare began purchase of office supplies and other material. Bids were requested for repair and renovation of experiment station buildings at La Jota and Chipiriri. Bids were also being sought for tractors, implements, office equipment and furniture.

The IBTA/Chapare budget request for first quarter 1985 was prepared with revisions taking recent price increases into account.

Mr. John Fasullo, USAID/Bolivia project manager, approved retroactive salaries for five Ex-PRODES employees who voluntarily took care of Chapare nurseries before IBTA/Chapare was established. Procedures for the legal transfer of nurseries from DIRECO to IBTA/Chapare were initiated in December.

The following personnel were contracted by IBTA/Chapare during December:

1. Raúl Terán,	Administrator	1 Dec.
2. Cesar Mealla	Tech. 2	1 Dec.

A \$ 1,000 revolving fund was established for Experience, Incorporated at Banco de Cochabamba.

Proposed changes in job descriptions for the EI Extension Advisor and Agricultural Economist were submitted to Mr. Oswaldo Antezana, USAID assistant project manager for the Chapare.

USAID/Experience, Inc. contracted with Mr. Ricardo Paniagua as caretaker of the Staff House (Automobile Club premises) in Villa Tunari, Chapare.

Two trips were made to the Chapare by EI personnel during December. On 7 December, Joe Lopez accompanied Francisco Zannier and Daniel Sánchez to La Jota and Chipiriri to begin development of a work schedule for extension activities. On 19 December, Lopez and Owens accompanied Francisco Zannier, Raúl Terán and others to La Jota and Chipiriri to pay salaries to IBTA personnel. Architect Froilan Caveró accompanied us on this trip to assess damage to experiment station buildings.

The following meetings were attended by EI personnel, IBTA/Chapare, SDTB, etc.

- 10 Dec. - INM, DIRECO, USAID. Discussion of roles in control and development.
- 11 Dec. - USAID. Orientation for Penney Farley, Bolivia Desk Officer, AID/Washington.
- 13 Dec. - Univ. of Cochabamba - Buffalo Project.
- 18 Dec. - CIBO. Discussion of bids for John Deere tractors and Implements.
- 24 Dec. (La Paz) - USAID. Meetings with various AID officials regarding housing, furniture, appliances, etc.
- 28 Dec. - CORDECO Pres. Mr. Vargas. Discussion of relationship between SDTB, CORDECO, coordination and cooperation.

B. Technical

IBTA/Chapare, EI personnel, Secretariat personnel, Regional IBTA personnel and others attended an AID sponsored seminar on land use in the Chapare. The two-day seminar was presented by Douglas Pool, Juan Carlos Quiroga and IRIARTA. A land use map prepared by Joseph Tosi was used as the basis for classifying and determining optimum land use for the nine microregions of the Chapare.

Meetings were held in Cochabamba with farmer representatives of three Chapare communities. They requested assistance for developing agricultural programs in their respective communities. Arrangements were made for visits to each community with the objectives of identifying their current agricultural systems and designing appropriate agricultural programs according to their needs, desires and resources.

A pre-service training program for newly hired IBTA/Chapare personnel was discussed with IBTA experiment station directors. If approved by the Directorate, the training program will be held 21 - 25 January 1985.

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An IBTA tractor from the Chapare was brought to Cochabamba for repairs.

IBTA/Chapare and EI personnel began development of a work schedule for IBTA personnel in the Chapare. This schedule, which covers primarily extension and training activities, will be further detailed and expanded in early 1985.

Forage trials at Chipiriri were observed and photographed during December.

II. Issues and Solutions

Political and social unrest and economic instability continue to impede planned activities by IBTA/Chapare. It seems that some of the political problems have been temporarily resolved, and IBTA/Chapare has received money from USAID. Hopefully, we will be able to work in the Chapare much more during January 1985.

The rampant inflation in Bolivia is serious cause for concern to IBTA/Chapare. The budget for September, October, November and December 1984 was originally calculated on the basis of US\$ 1.00 = 5,000 pesos. Due to devaluation, the dollar was officially valued at 9000 pesos at the end of the year - roughly an increase of 80 percent. During the same time, the parallel market rate has increased from about 10,000 to 45,000 pesos; more than a fourfold increase. Since prices (and IBTA expenses) follow the same general trend, the IBTA/Chapare peso budget is inadequate for its intended purposes. The same applies to the EI revolving fund. Hopefully, a more realistic devaluation in January or February will ameliorate the situation. It seems likely, however, that additional funds will have to be budgeted, or that activities will have to be scaled down. Bolivian salary scales are deemed inadequate.

As of the end of December 1984, USAID has not placed orders for furniture and appliances for EI employees. This is likely to necessitate long stays in hotels for EI technicians; perhaps even beyond the 90 day limit for temporary quarters allowance. A further complication may be that rent and TQA will have to be paid simultaneously for the same family.

III. Work Planned for Next Reporting Period

IBTA/Chapare - EI personnel will make field trips to Chapare communities at the invitation of community leaders. As mentioned above, we already have invitations from three such communities. The purpose of these visits will be to investigate production systems, outline agricultural programs, select demonstration farm sites, identify para-technician and to amplify our acquaintance with the Chapare and its people.

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A pre-Service training program for new IBTA/Chapare personnel is planned from 21 - 15 January. A curriculum will be designed and training staff selected.

Clean-up and repair of experiment stations and nurseries will continue. Equipment purchase and repair will also be continued.

Several additional IBTA/Chapare personnel are expected to be hired during January 1985. In addition, three new EI technicians are expected in January to complete the EI staffing component.

The development of an IBTA/Chapare Work Plan and Activities Schedule will be a priority activity in January.