



SUPPORT TO BENI

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Government has a comprehensive assistance program that supports the Bolivian Government's National Development Plan.



Responding to a request by the Government of Bolivia, the U.S. Government provided humanitarian aid to Beni, helping to mitigate the impact of flooding in 2006, 2007 and 2008 and protect the health and welfare of Bolivian families.

Through its official foreign assistance agency, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Government supports development in 14 municipalities in the department of Beni. Projects seek to reduce poverty through economic growth generated by enterprise development and increased productivity; improve access to health care for the poor; promote environmental protection and conservation; and provide disaster response. USAID programs create opportunities for marginalized populations, promoting their social, political, and economic inclusion.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE POPULATION

The municipalities of the Department of Beni have varying levels of poverty and development needs. USAID continues to support financial institutions through the electronic transactions system "ServiRed", which provides more opportunities for people to more efficiently manage their money, while facilitating the sending and receipt of remittances at competitive rates. The introduction of expanded financial services has included the inauguration of a new financial institution branch in the remote town of San Joaquin in 2008.

IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF BOLIVIANS

USAID seeks to improve the health of underserved Bolivians by increasing access to quality health services through the strengthening public and NGO health facilities and networks. Our program supports the Ministry of Health's policy of extending services to rural areas, with a special focus on family and community health.

In Beni, the program supports training, technical assistance and provision of equipment to enhance the quality of health services related to maternal and child health and for the prevention, treatment and control of infectious diseases; as well as to build the capacity of regional and municipal health authorities to manage the health system. In addition, in selected municipalities the program supports a network of health volunteers who focus on health education and promotion activities, and facilitate community efforts to identify and solve local health problems. With the assistance of USAID, two Bolivian NGOs, PROSALUD and CIES, are directly providing a range of health services to the people of Beni.

USAID has also developed a Municipal Matching Fund to help local governments make investments intended to improve the health status of their constituents. In October 2007, five grants totaling approximately \$300,000 were awarded to rural municipalities to improve access to health care, leveraging matching contributions of \$130,000 from the municipalities.



Two young USAID beneficiaries during the 2008 floods.

ENVIRONMENT

Through its support to local and indigenous organizations, USAID promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiverse Amboró-Madidi Corridor, which contains 9 protected areas, 9 indigenous groups and covers over 12% of the national territory. The program helps local communities to develop economic initiatives such as ecotourism that provide an opportunity for sustainable incomes, improve environmental and land use planning, and raise awareness on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources through formal and non-formal education.

EFFECTIVE DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNMENTS

With the democratic election of departmental governments in 2005, Bolivia moved further toward accountable, decentralized government. As it does worldwide, USAID is providing technical assistance in basic institutional strengthening and training to Bolivia's departmental governments to help them assume more effectively their new roles in planning, financing, and delivering services to citizens. In Beni, USAID supported the Prefecture by developing models for de-concentrated sub-national government tailored to its particular needs and circumstances.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In 2006, 2007 and 2008, the U.S. Government provided more than US \$3 million in humanitarian aid aimed at mitigating the effects of flooding in the departments of Beni and Santa Cruz. Temporary camps were put in place in Trinidad and Santa Ana, along with corresponding health centers designed to protect the health of people living in the affected areas.

USAID in BENI

Municipalities where at least one USAID Project is Active

