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**PRE-LAUNCH ACTIVITIES
FOR SUERO DE LA VIDA**

La Paz, Bolivia
November 8 - 11, 1995

**BASICS Technical Officer
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ACRONYMS

BASICS	Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival
INTI	Drogueria INTI
MOH	Ministry of Health
ORS	Oral Rehydration Salts or Oral Rehydration Solution
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

PURPOSE OF VISIT

BASICS Technical Officer Camille Saade traveled to Bolivia November 8 - 11, 1995 to assist the Ministry of Health (MOH), the interagency group, UNICEF, and Laboratorios INTI finalize preparations for the ORS promotional campaign and product launch. At INTI, Saade reviewed the promotional strategy, including training of the sales force in the appropriate use of promotional materials, and scheduling for the launch and post-launch sales activities. He reviewed plans with the interagency group and helped to coordinate remaining public relations and other activities in order to help ensure the quality of the promotional campaign and launch. Saade also contributed to an analysis of the baseline survey results.

BACKGROUND

As part of its objective to improve the management of diarrheal diseases at the household level, BASICS has been providing technical assistance to develop a sustainable ORS marketing program in Bolivia. In April 1994, an interagency group in Bolivia composed of the MOH, UNICEF, PAHO and USAID/BASICS agreed to expand the availability of ORS throughout the country. Technical assistance to support this effort has been provided since April 1994.

An analysis of opportunities in the commercial sector led to a partnership with Drogueria INTI, a successful pharmaceutical company. The goal of this newfound partnership is to initiate widespread marketing of ORS to various populations in Bolivia. After testing the positioning concept for the new national ORS brand *Suero de la Vida*, Drogueria INTI and Laboratorios Alfa, a minor ORS producer, developed a marketing strategy to reach the maximum number of possible caretakers. This strategy targets caretakers in the home, private providers, pharmacists, and retailers in rural areas. A promotional strategy utilizing the sales forces of ORS producers to directly reach commercial groups was developed and scheduled to begin in late October 1995. As an initial step in evaluating the impact of the ORS commercialization campaign, BASICS has is conducting a baseline survey to measure knowledge and behavior related to ORS.

TRIP ACTIVITIES

Revision of Campaign Material with Advertising Agency

Mr. Mario Telleria of UNICEF and Mr. Saade met with the Grey/Bolivia, the advertising agency developing the *Suero de la Vida* promotion material. Upon their arrival, the materials were at the final stages before the processes of printing and production. The materials were then pretested, the results were incorporated into updated versions and presented to Mr. Telleria and Mr. Saade who compared the material aimed at each audience with its corresponding strategy. The promotional material to be used by the sales force for physicians, pharmacies, and nurses was off-focus because they did not reflect the advertising strategy. For the sake of time, Grey/Bolivia

immediately developed a new copy of the material to allow the agency to focus on the appropriate design and layout. Deadlines were established for the delivery that was to take place before Saade's departure. On the agreed upon date, another revision occurred with instructions for the fine-tuning of the designs. Minor comments were made for the material designed for the consumers. Printed materials such as posters, leaflets, stickers, and wobblers were also slightly revised. As to the media tools, only one radio spot was developed. Grey/Bolivia was urged to develop different radio tools such as plays and interactive educational programs. Grey also presented two television story boards, one of which concentrated on the explanation of the mixing instructions, and the other was more of a commercial spot on *Suero de la Vida*. Unfortunately, this spot was cluttered with animated characters representing every potential audience, thus diluting the impact of the message which should have been focused on the product itself. Grey/Bolivia estimated the cost to develop one video to be approximately \$8,000, twice the original estimate. PAHO, which was to finance the production of the video, rejected this new figure and consequently, the television advertising was set aside temporarily.

Coordination of promotion with INTI

The first meeting with Dr. Shilling and Dr. Muñoz Reyes was held to discuss the present status of the preparatory stages of the campaign which were as follows.

- *Production.* Thirty thousand finished packets are now available for distribution. The rest of the first order of aluminum foil to produce 20,000 packets had arrived and needed custom's clearance. It was expected to have enough finished packets to launch the product by December 10.
- *The display carton.* Telleria and Saade agreed that the packets of *Suero de la Vida* needed to be displayed in dispenser cartons containing twenty units. This cost will add to the unit cost of the packet which must be kept to a minimum. In view of this, INTI has requested that the donor agencies finance the first batch of 10,000 cartons and will make plans to take charge of it in the future.
- *The price.* The final cost structure was not ready at the time of the meeting and INTI was not ready to commit to the selling price of *Suero de la Vida*. Mr. Saade and Mr. Telleria encouraged them to provide this information before the next MOH meeting on November 20. Later, at the MOH meeting, INTI announced that the minimum wholesale price will be 1.70 Bolivianos each (US\$0.35).
- *Flavoring.* It was agreed not to add flavoring to *Suero de la Vida* in order to eliminate additional costs. According to INTI, display carton costs combined with flavoring expenses would add up to 30 percent more to the packet cost.
- *Distribution.* Distribution should take place before the official launch with at least one carton of 20 packets sold to each pharmacy.

- **The Launch.** The launch will occur in two phases. First, a professional launch aimed at physicians and pharmacists which will be carried out primarily by medical representatives from INTI. The second phase, aimed at the general public, should occur two to three months later and will involve the media.
- **Official Health Registration.** The registration request for *Suero de la Vida* has been submitted to the MOH by INTI. They would like help in securing a fast approval in order to obtain the registration number which will be printed on each packet. At the same time, INTI expects a de-listing of *Suero de la Vida* to be sold as an OTC product outside of pharmacies.
- **Sales Force Training.** Saade and Telleria agreed with INTI on the necessity of motivating and equipping the medical representatives with convincing knowledge and material. This training will require the assistance of Dr. Ana Maria Aguilar, along with sales techniques aimed at maximizing the use of the promotional material(s) developed for *Suero de la Vida*.

Update on Laboratorios Alfa

At the time of this visit, Alfa had not yet received the sacheting machine ordered from Peru. They are very keen on joining INTI in the launch, and have requested that their medical representatives be involved in the training along with INTI's sales force.

Planning Pre Launch with MOH

Dr. Xavier Torres Goitia, the Under Secretary of Health and Dr. Victoria Urioste, the Director of Pharmaceuticals called an inter-agency meeting on November 20 to receive an update from all parties concerned about the status of the campaign launch. Mr. Telleria and Mr. Saade presented a progress report about the campaign and highlighted the remaining issues. Specifically, they discussed product registration and changes in the promotion campaign. Dr. Urioste promised to hasten the registration of *Suero de la Vida*. She insisted on involving the Secretary of Health in the official launch and requested that we prepare a brief speech for him. The launch is anticipated to begin in early 1996, depending on the readiness of the sales force and the availability of materials.

Baseline Market Research

Mr. Alberto Quiroga, the Director of Encuestas y Estudios, requested a ten-day extension to provide the results from a survey of pharmacists, doctors, shop keepers, and consumers which was still being analyzed. Consideration was given to an additional study for pharmacists; a simulated purchase survey in which an assessor poses as a mother requesting treatment for her child's diarrhea. This survey was believed to be a more realistic assessment of pharmacists behavior. Mr. Quiroga suggested a methodology and a sample of 110 pharmacies from major

urban centers. Following the acceptance of this survey, he was provided with a copy of a similar survey from Indonesia.

NEXT STEPS

Mr. Saade will review and approve the latest material forwarded by Grey/Bolivia. The agency will then proceed with final artwork and printing. Mr. Telleria will coordinate the training program for the sales force with Dr. Ana Maria Aguilar and Dr. Herman Ostertag, the Marketing Director from INTI. Mr. Telleria will also investigate more economical film studios for the development and production of television advertisements. He will then secure financing from appropriate donors and follow up on the progress of the campaign preparation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**DRAFT ANNOUNCEMENT SPEECH FOR LAUNCHING OF
SUERO DE LA VIDA**

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DRAFT ANNOUNCEMENT SPEECH FOR LAUNCHING OF SUERO DE LA VIDA

Within its CDD program the Ministry of Health continues its relentless efforts to prevent death from diarrhea which is still a major cause of fatality among young children. The Ministry is proud to announce that through its public health facilities, it will continue to provide free ORS, an essential product to prevent dehydration due to diarrhea, the principal cause of death.

In addition, to complement its public health system coverage, the Ministry has recently engineered with the help of international organizations such as OPS, UNICEF, and USAID a partnership with the local private sector in order to produce, distribute and promote a commercial ORS. This new ORS product called **Suero de la Vida** is produced locally by Laboratorios INTI and Laboratorios ALFA, and will soon be distributed in all parts of the country.

Both medical and pharmacists associations have enthusiastically endorsed this initiative. ANPROFAR has agreed to ask its members to reduce their margin and keep the price of **Suero de la Vida** at an affordable level to the majority of Bolivian parents. We have taken the unprecedented initiative to declare **Suero de la Vida** a popular product to expand its availability to the most remote areas where there is no pharmacy or even a health center. Therefore, **Suero de la Vida** will be available also in tiendas and small shops in rural areas.

Our collaborative effort in the commercialization of **Suero de la Vida** will be a major step in reducing infant and child mortality in the country. **Suero de la Vida** recupera y da fuerza al niño con diarrhea.

APPENDIX B

**AYUDA MEMORIA - REUNIÓN EN LA INSTALACIONES
INDUSTRIALES DE INTI**

APPENDIX B

AYUDA MEMORIA - REUNIÓN EN LA INSTALACIONES INDUSTRIALES DE INTI

Fecha: 16 de noviembre de 1995.

Participantes: Dr. Dieter Schilling, Dr. Gonzalo Muñoz Reyes, Dr. Till Schilling, Sr. Camille Saade y Sr. Mario Telleria.

Acuerdos principales:

1. **Producción. Estado actual.-** Se disponen en la actualidad de 30.000 envases y se tiene la información respecto a 450 kilos de envases (250.000 SOBRES) que están en la aduana. Se estima que alrededor del 10 de diciembre se comenzara la Producción del SDV con la totalidad de los envases disponibles.
2. **Envase de venta.** Se acordó que la presentación será realizada en cajas de 20 unidades de cartulina en forma de dispensador que pueda ser colgado o exhibido en el mostrador de ventas. Se tiene las características y especificaciones del Dr. Muñoz Reyes y se esta en el proceso de cotizarlo en la cantidad de 10.000 suficientes para 200.000 sobres. Con el propósito de mantener el precio del SDV en el nivel mas bajo (Se debe recordar que el precio de demanda del consumidor esta dispuesto a pagar un boliviano por sobre) se acordó que este volumen de empaques será cubierto por la campana promocional. En el futuro este costo ser cubierto por la empresa fabricante.
3. **Precio del producto.** Se acordó que el día lunes 20 de noviembre, el Dr. Dieter Schilling comunicara al Sr. Camille Saade el precio ex-fabrica. Esta información comunicada vía fax a la oficina de BASICS en Bolivia (Fax numero 391503).
4. **Sabor.** Se acordó no saborizar el producto en el lanzamiento del producto en razón de mantener el precio del SDV a un nivel bajo cercano al precio de demanda(1 Bs.), determinado por la encuesta de sensibilidad de precio. En el futuro se acordó utilizar los resultados obtenidos en la investigación de saborización con el SDV o con otros productos similares.
5. **Distribución.** Se acordó que la Distribución será realizada como fase preparatoria del lanzamiento considerando un mínimo de una caja de 20 sobres para cada farmacia y otros lugares de venta.
6. **Lanzamiento.** Se acordó que el lanzamiento será realizado en dos fases:
Primera: Profesional, considerando el universo de profesionales médicos y farmacias, con visitantes médicos.

OR

Segunda: Publico en general con la utilización de medios masivos.

La primera fase será iniciada en los primeros días del mes de enero, previa disponibilidad de visitadores, materiales de promoción y producto. Inmediatamente antes del día de lanzamiento se realizara un día de capacitación de todos los visitadores médicos de INTI y ALFA. La capacitación comprenderá conocimiento de la diarrea y del producto, técnicas de uso del material promocional y técnicas de venta.

Después del cumplimiento de tres ciclos de promoción profesional la segunda fase de lanzamiento al publico en general será iniciada.

- 7. Registro sanitario del producto. El trámite de registro sanitario del SDV esta siendo iniciado por INTI, con la presentación de una solicitud a la SNS esperándose una rápida finalización del mismo. Al mismo tiempo se espera un rápido resultado en la declaración de producto OTC y producto popular por parte de la SNS.**
- 8. En respuesta a la convocatoria a una Reunión del para el día lunes 20 de noviembre INTI estará representada por el Dr. Gonzalo Muñoz Reyes.**

APPENDIX C

LIST OF CONTACTS

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BASICS

Dr. Ana Maria Aguilar

DROGUERIA INTI

Dr. Dieter Schilling, President
Menoz Reyes, Production Director

ENCUESTOS Y ESTUDIOS

Ing. Luis Alberto Quiroga, Gerente General

GREY BOLIVIA

Cynthia Costa de Sarmiento, Accounting Director

LABORATORIOS ALFA

Dr. Juan José Ferres, General Manager

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Dr. Xavier Torres Goitia, Under Secretary of Health
Dr. Victoria Urioste, Director of Pharmaceuticals

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Dr. Martha Mejia, Child Health Specialist

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

Dr. Guido Cornale, Director of Operations
Dr. Jorge Mariscal, Chief of Health Section
Mr. Mário Telleria, Marketing Consultant

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Paul Ehmer, Chief of Health, Population, and Nutrition Office

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