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Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian
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Office of Food for Peace**

Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Results Report

**Awardee Name /Host Country: Project Concern
International- Bolivia**

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Awardee HQ Contact Name	Bianca Morales-Egan
Awardee HQ Contact Address	5151 Murphy Canyon Rd, Suite 320, San Diego CA
Awardee HQ Contact Telephone Number	(858) 279 9690 x314
Awardee HQ Contact Fax Number	(858) 6940294
Awardee HQ Contact Email Address	Bmorales-egan@projectconcern.org

Host Country Office Contact Name	José Murguía Oropeza
Host Country Office Address	835 Roberto Prudencio St, Calacoto - La Paz, Bolivia
Host Country Office Contact Telephone Number	(591) (2) 2771454, 2771465
Host Country Office Contact Fax Number	(591) (2) 212 8717
Host Country Office Contact Email Address	jmurguia@pci-bolivia.org

List of Acronyms

USAID: United States Agency for International Development.
PCI: Project Concern International
USAID: United States Department of Agriculture
FFE: Food for education
SAFCI: Intercultural Family and Community Health
POA: Annual Operational Plans

1. Introduction:

The Project "More Food, Better Education", funded by the Government of the United States through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Project Concern International (PCI), was implemented during a 12-month period from September 30, 2008 to September 30, 2009, with an additional no-cost extension period of 3 months (December 2009), for a total 15-month life of the project.

This project was proposed by PCI, a US-based non-profit organization with more than 30 years of experience in managing grants, contracts and cooperative agreements with USAID and the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and with excellent knowledge of US Government's reporting procedures. Since 2002, PCI has implemented a total of six USDA-funded Food for Education (FFE) programs in Bolivia, in coordination with the Ministry of Education.

Bolivia is the country with the most unequal distribution of wealth and income in Latin America. As a reference, mortality rate among Bolivians whose incomes are in the bottom 20% is higher than that of Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria and Cameroon; only 13% of children from low income families finish primary school¹; of every 100 children 4-5 years of age, 61 do not enter preschool; of every 100 children 6-13 years of age, four do not attend primary school; and 14 out of every 100 school-aged children do not attend school. In the face of these facts, PCI collaborates with municipal government officials, prioritizing schools in the poorest municipalities in the Departments of Oruro, La Paz, Cochabamba and Potosi, with the aim of reducing food insecurity and improving children's health and nutrition.

This project has contributed to advancing Bolivia's National Development Plan, specifically regarding Food Security, Food Production, community social empowerment, Education and Health. It has also contributed to the Millennium goals relating to: 1) The eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; 2) achieving universal coverage on primary-school education; 3) promoting gender equality; and 4) reducing child mortality.

To achieve these objectives, a series of criteria have been established for selecting the targeted municipalities, including: a low human development index; municipalities with moderate to severe poverty levels; and municipalities with high level of vulnerability to food insecurity; among other. A total of 19 municipalities in four departments of Bolivia were selected using these criteria, as shown in the table below:

Department	Municipalities	# of Schools
Potosi	Caripuyo	44
Oruro	Santiago de Andamarca	18
	Curahuara de Carangas	20
	Corque	29
La Paz	Umala	35
	Ichoca	33

¹ State of Human Rights in Bolivia,

	Chacarilla	8
	San Pedro de Curahuara	32
Cochabamba	Bolivar	41
	Torotoro	74
	Anzaldo	43
	Omereque	25
	Villa Vila	19
	Villa Rivero	18
	Sacabamba	23
	Santibañez	15
	Villa Gualberto Villarroel	9
	Tacachi	2
	Capinota	30
TOTAL		518

The project's planned direct beneficiaries include:

- 25,932 children
- 774 parents
- 387 teachers
- 30 municipal government officials.

The project has 4 expected results which were developed based on PCI's own experience in the implementation of previous comprehensive food security projects. Up to September 30, 2009, progress towards achieving the 4 expected project results included:

1. Improved Nutrition of School-Aged Children

Indicator	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
100% of schools with School Nutrition Committees trained.	387	501	100%
Distribution of 100% of rations planned for the school year.	207,456	125,909	61%
Number of supervision visits to schools conducted	1,715	1,142	67%

The project has strengthened the organization of parents in the so-called "School Nutrition Committees", transferring the skills for local management of the program, in order to allow parents and the broader education communities to become major players in the municipal government-managed programs to be developed by municipalities after the end of the project. Likewise, the project staff designed and implemented a supervision plan at the three levels of PCI-Bolivia's organizational structure, including: national, departmental and municipal levels, thus ensuring a proper and transparent use of resources. PCI expects to achieve all the planned program activities by December, 2009.

It is important to point out that the 25,609 directly benefited children (See Annex D, Form B) correspond to distributions conducted during the month of September, 2009. Not all of these beneficiaries received a ration consistently throughout the eight-month of food distribution implementation.



Workgroups during training workshops for School Food Committees. They are presenting proper practices for storing food, and organization and cleaning of storage rooms. Workshop in municipalities of V. Rivero and Bolívar. March, 2009.

2. Improved Family Health and Nutrition Behaviors

Indicator	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
774 parents trained in health, hygiene, food and nutritional security, food handling and preparation	774	876	100%
At least 387 teachers trained in health, hygiene, food and nutritional security, and food handling and preparation	387	492	100%
Number of promoters trained in health, hygiene, food and nutritional security, and food handling and preparation	15	14	93%
A total of 55,753 people reached with media messages on health, hygiene, food and nutritional security, and food handling and preparation	55,753	51,000	91%
10% increase from baseline in the number of schools that implement health activities in classrooms (health, sports and classroom projects).	302	122	40%
Number of children de-wormed	10,774	9,805	91%

In order to strengthen a community-based structure that allows the exercise of local social empowerment in the long-term, the project trained parents in health, nutrition and child's basic rights; while at the same time strengthening the capacity of teachers in the same topics. Under the model of "Intercultural Family and Community Health", the project has trained health promoters to become future community health agents or authorities who will promote the needs of the community at the municipal health roundtables or committees. PCI developed a mass communication strategy using the same messages to educate the broader public, promoting health as a right.

3. Improved and Sustained Food Production at the Community Level

Indicator	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
At least 10% of schools implementing food production activities (vegetable gardens, greenhouses and / or fruit farms)	52	80	100%

Within the framework of National Development Plan objectives, and to promote local development, the project incorporated food production in schools through the construction of school gardens, greenhouses and farms, in order to allow parents and the education community to contribute locally grown food products, such as eggs and vegetables, to supplement school feeding. With this in mind, the project has strengthened the financial administration and management capacities of local community structures, thus improving the prospects of a sustainable income generation for school feeding activities. This strategy is being implemented through the distribution of seeds by PCI, and the work of parents, and included the production of vegetables in schools that helps ensure local input by school parents.



Vegetable garden in Yambata school in the municipality of Torotoro, with seeds provided by PCI

4. Strengthened Capacity for Local Management

Indicator	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
At least two people in each municipality have completed the training cycle on project management	30	20	67%
At least 10% increase in the amount of resources allocated in the municipal budget for school feeding during 2010, as compared to 2009.	2,194,168\$us	Not available	
80% of participating municipalities have a school feeding plan for 2010	12	8	67%

With the relation to the sustainability strategy, the project has strengthened the capacities of municipal government officials, such as mayors and technicians, to implement and manage similar supplementary school feeding programs, using the school feeding program management guide entitled “Institutional Strengthening Plan”, a manual prepared by PCI during a previous project. The project expects to complete all planned trainings activities in participating municipalities by December, 2009. In terms of municipal investment in education, the municipalities’ Annual Operational Plans are in the process of approval by the Ministry of Finance and the final information will be available in December, 2009.

As made evident by these results, the project has focused on sustainability by providing rations for only three schools days per week and municipalities providing food to cover the two days of school. This strategy has encouraged local families and municipal governments to organize and propose different school feeding models to ensure future sustainability, adding to recently adopted government health and education policies that aim at the universal coverage of these types of programs.

At the beginning of project implementation, PCI developed an internal workshop to standardize technical financial monitoring processes, tools and mechanism. PCI also strengthened the use of internal monitoring tools. With regards to project monitoring, PCI has established a number of procedures and levels of supervision and control of food rations distributed, as well as mechanisms for the verification of food consumption in schools and data input into the Integrated System for Food Control, which allows school children themselves to monitor food rations distributed and consumed in each school. Project teams reported on a monthly basis on the qualitative and quantitative progress achieved by the project, allowing critical analysis of achievements and timely managerial decision making. Supervisions are also performed at the regional, national and local levels, in order to monitor the quality of information. PCI's regional offices in Cochabamba and Oruro analyze progress on a monthly basis, previous to sending the reports to the national level offices. To ensure the transfer of capacities to the municipalities, joint supervision activities are conducted between project and municipal staff, using specifically design tools. As part of the project evaluation process, PCI implemented a baseline survey using customized data collection instruments for parents, teachers and children. A highlight of baseline results includes:

- On teachers' recognition of the benefits of school feeding: the majority of teachers expressed a positive opinion about school feeding. Among the benefits of school feeding they mentioned improved attention in class and improved learning by students, as well as "students who live far from school and walk there no longer fall asleep during class".
- With regards to parents assuming responsibility over their children's nutrition; most parents send their children to school having provided them with breakfast. Only a few children went to school on an empty stomach, showing that parents have gained greater responsibility and awareness about the importance of nutrition. Parents also appreciate that their children's school is being benefited with a school feeding program, given the importance of these programs in improving their children's health and nutrition. In line with their parents' responses, children also reported that they receive food before leaving for school and say that supplementary school feeding is good.²

2. Success Stories

"Improving nutrition of boys and girls"

The project "More food, better education," implemented by PCI, has managed to establish vegetable gardens in a total of 72 schools in the municipalities of Cochabamba and Potosi, with the purpose of improving the nutrition children by introducing vegetables in their daily food intake, while using this activity as an educational resource for skills development. By including fresh vegetables in school meals, the project is providing children the opportunity to add important vitamins and nutrients to their daily nutritional intake, helping them grow healthy and happy. The process for establishing school gardens was carried forward with the provision of seeds, followed by training in agricultural management techniques and support for the harvest of the agricultural products. With great enthusiasm from all members of the education community, parents organized to prepare the terrain in order to support students. Students also organized, and together with teachers they conducted several activities to monitor their "classroom practice", where they learned about the entire production process. Anticipation grew among children as the plants were growing, and many of them were

² Baseline Report, Project "More Food, Better Education", 2009, PCI.

coming to see the garden even outside of their planned schedules, in order to observe with great curiosity how plants were developing. In the cases where harvest was successful, vegetables were used to prepare food and children ate them with great satisfaction, because for the first time in their life they were eating something they had sown, cared for and harvested with their own efforts.

The great learning potential of these school gardens improves the nutritional quality of food consumed by the entire family, since these practices can be reproduced at home with the knowledge acquired by parents and children, thus improving access of families to diverse sources of essential micronutrients for a healthy development. It is therefore very important that the implementation of the school gardens be always combined with nutrition messages aimed not only at children, but also at their families, and creating a culture of vegetable production and consumption in the community.

** Photo attached in Attachment H.-1 Supplemental Materials.*

3. Lessons Learned

- Before signing the inter-institutional agreement with the municipalities, it is important to fully convey to the municipalities the magnitude of the commitments entailed by the agreement, as some municipalities withdrew their participation before complying with their obligated contribution, affecting other interested municipalities.
- The use of a new semi-processed product represented a challenge for PCI, since it demanded extra creativity and persistence in order to make the case for this product among beneficiaries, regarding its practicality and agreeable taste, by incorporating locally produced foods (such as potatoes, tomatoes, spinaches, beans, etc.)
- Due to new processes and structures at the municipal level that require the approval of the municipal councils for any development project, it is important to take into account the time needed for negotiation, since issuing Municipal Resolutions of approval is slowed by the dynamics and time availability of the members of these bodies.
- Continuous monitoring should be performed at all levels, ensuring compliance by municipalities of the commitment to provide food rations to cover two days of school meals during the week, as part of the agreement signed, ensuring that children have food in schools five days a week.
- The implementation of training activities should begin during the first stage of implementation to ensure compliance with targets and thus identify and strengthen the effective participation of School Food Committees, teachers and effectively promote behavior change by school children.
- Given the constant “change of heart” within the municipalities with regard to their participation in the project, the staff has had to continuously adjust the targets and increase them according to the fully comply with obligations assumed by PCI in its cooperation agreement.
- The constant encouragement and support of regional and national staff members to field staff, by permanently acknowledging the work performed, will optimize performance and lead to better results in meeting expected targets.

4. Attachments:

D. Tracking Table for Beneficiaries and Resources

A ii: IFRP Resources Table

B. Beneficiaries by sector

H. Supplemental Materials (2)- Photo and Food Use and Management Monitoring Form

I. Completeness Checklist



