

BOLIVIA

18 MAY 1984

PL. ANT 556

ISN 1/9863

FAMILY PLANNING COMMUNICATION  
COUNTRY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MISSION  
IN BOLIVIA

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Dates of In-Country Work:  
January 26 - February 2, 1984

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this trip by Patrick L. Coleman to Bolivia on January 26 through February 2, 1984 was to finalize details for the development of a country project with the Centro de Orientación Familiar (COF). During an initial meeting with the USAID Population Officer, Ms. Katherine Jones-Patrón, the scope of work was expanded to include meetings with three private-sector family planning organizations.

I was able to work out the general ideas and concepts of a project with COF's Executive Director, Luis Llano. We agreed to develop: 1) radio programs and spots; 2) print materials for users; 3) print materials for family planning promoters and service providers; 4) audio cassettes for use on inter-city bus routes; and 5) a series of seminars on population and development issues.

Each of the three private-sector organizations, Consultorio Radial de Orientación Familiar, Sociedad Boliviana de Reproducción Humana and Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, brought me up to date on the status of their projects. I reviewed the project I was developing with COF and attempted to encourage each of them to work together in the development and usage of media materials. I stated that JHU/PCS would not be able to develop projects separately with each of them at the present time.

I also had a meeting with the Population Department of the Ministerio de Planeamiento y Coordinación. This project has been supported for the last five years by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. The project is currently developing media materials to encourage decisionmakers and opinion leaders to create a national population policy. Lic. José Baldivia, Director of the Population Department, was also interested in formalizing a working relationship with JHU/PCS. After discussions we both agreed that the best way for us to begin might be through a series of communication seminars designed to improve the communication skills of different public-sector communication program managers.

My principal recommendations for JHU/PCS are:

- 1) to fund the project proposal that is to be developed with COF;
- 2) to explore the possibility of acquiring additional funds in order to support the communication efforts of other (besides COF) Bolivian family planning organizations;
- 3) to seek additional funding for a series of communication workshops if the Ministerio de Planeamiento y Coordinación submits a proposal to JHU/PCS;
- 4) to encourage the formation of a private-sector family planning federation; and
- 5) to review with USAID/Bolivia any project proposals that are developed.

## BOLIVIA TRIP REPORT

### Agency for International Development

Upon my arrival in Bolivia I had an initial meeting with Katherine Jones-Patrón who is in charge of AID population activities in the country. Katherine brought me up-to-date on the changes within the country since my last visit there nine months earlier. She announced that there was a much more permissive environment for family planning than had existed a year ago. Katherine felt that this opening should allow The Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) project to be more aggressive in the development of a country project with COF. I explained to Katherine my conversations with Luis Llano, Executive Director of COF, including our ideas on the scope of activities which a project could encompass. Katherine was very receptive to the ideas which were presented and stated she was anxious to see a draft of a project proposal.

Katherine expanded my original scope of work by suggesting that I visit the Sociedad Boliviana de Reproducción Humana (SBRH), the Centro de Investigaciones Sociales (CIS), and the Consultorio Radial de Orientación Familiar (CROF). I had visited each of these groups in my earlier visit and Katherine suggested that I visit each of them again, in order to give me an up-to-date overview of the private sector key players in the family planning field.

Katherine also informed me that the Westinghouse Contraceptive Prevalence Study was almost completed. Only final data analysis needed to be completed and the results would be ready for dissemination.

At the present time USAID is financing 19 separate family planning activities through US-based donor organizations.

Before departing, I had a debriefing with Dr. Lee Hougen, USAID Human Resources Division Chief, because Katherine was out of the country. I explained to Lee what I had accomplished during my visit and the details of the country project proposal that COF was developing. During this discussion it was suggested that it would be beneficial for family planning in the country if

newspapers receive current facts about population and development. Dr. Hougen wishes to review any proposals developed for appropriateness.

### Centro de Orientación Familiar

The Executive Director of COF, Luis Llano, had submitted a project proposal to JHU/PCS during my April, 1983 visit. The original proposal called for the sponsoring of a series of seminars on different aspects of population and development in order to form a professional work group which would act as a conduit for population and family planning information dissemination. The project was discussed with COF during my April, 1983 visit, during a visit to the JHU/PCS offices in May, 1983, during the Quito Conference in August, 1983, and during a Development Associates conference in October, 1983. Further discussions with COF via telephone conversations enabled us to reach a consensus that the project proposal should be expanded.

I spent several days with Luis discussing specific ideas that could be incorporated into a project. Luis felt that both radio and print materials could be developed to support family planning service delivery activities. Luis also suggested that the bus drivers' labor union would allow him to play family planning cassette tapes on its inter-city bus routes. We reached agreement on the following activities which may be included in a COF-JHU/PCS project: 1) radio--short microprograms on health and family planning themes and spots listing clinic locations and hours of operation; 2) print--four leaflets on contraceptive methods: oral contraceptives, IUDs, barrier methods and natural family planning; one brochure on the demographic aspects of Bolivia; and another brochure on family planning concepts; 3) audio cassettes--which would contain 3/4 music and 1/4 family planning messages which would be played on buses during inter-city journeys; and 4) the original idea of the seminars on population and development.

We further agreed that COF would share any of the print materials developed under a JHU/PCS subagreement with other institutions in Bolivia that desired copies. These copies would be provided at no charge. Subsequent discussions with other Bolivian family planning organizations revealed that they would accept materials that were produced by COF as long as they carried no identifying logo from a rival organization.

Luis and I had several meetings in which we discussed the project. Luis received estimates from printers and radio stations in order for us to calculate a rough budget. The project will be for two years at an estimated cost of \$110,000. The anticipated start date is June 1, 1984.

COF is attempting to organize a group of Bolivian Parliamentarians in order to marshal official support for population and family planning activities, especially the development of a population policy. Towards this end Haroldo Sanford, President of the Inter-American Parliamentarians Group, was in Bolivia to talk and lobby with the Bolivians. Haroldo concurred that the people of Bolivia appear to be ready to accept family planning and a grass roots movement would enhance the probability of the government's development of a national population policy.

COF was also conducting a series of population, demography, family planning, sex education, human reproduction and first aid seminars for rural teachers sponsored by Development Associates. I attended one seminar in La Paz where Haroldo discussed population and development issues. Some of the teachers seemed to be confused about the relationship between population and Bolivia's development because several of them discussed the need for more people in the country in order to develop the regions of the country that are sparsely populated. In Santa Cruz I attended another seminar for rural teachers. Luis also asked me to give a lecture on human communication to the teachers. Rural teachers are the principal change agents in the rural areas because they live and work there. It was very encouraging for me to note their enthusiasm and receptivity to the ideas presented in the seminars. They were starving for any type of information which would make them better prepared to provide their communities with assistance. They stated that more and more teenage women are having babies and their already overburdened families are ill-prepared to assist them in caring and raising their offspring.

COF has nine functioning clinics at the present time, all in the major cities of Bolivia. It is expanding its services and anticipates having a total of 12 clinics by July 1984. They estimate that there will be 20,000 users of their services when they have all 12 clinics functioning. I visited two of their clinics in Santa Cruz and talked with several of their staff about their IEC needs.

They all concurred that there is a great need for the type of IEC activities that Luis and I had been talking about. When asked about the possibility of promoting specific clinics, the doctors stated that it is permitted but they cannot ethically promote themselves. They also said that as long as family planning is mentioned in the context of other medical services, i.e. pediatrics, dentistry, pre-natal, etc. there would be no problem in advertising specific clinics. They did express concern over their capabilities to handle an increase in demand. Luis assured them that he would provide as many contraceptives as they needed and support staff adequate for the situation.

### Consultorio Radial de Orientación Familiar

I had one meeting with the Director of CROF, Dr. Nancy Romero, and her Evaluation Chief, Francisco Torres. Nancy was eager to know about the possibility of JHU/PCS funding an expansion of her project that is currently receiving assistance from the Pathfinder Fund. I said that it was unlikely that we would directly fund her activities but it was possible that through our project with COF some activities in radio could be subcontracted to her organization. She was very worried about her radio activities being continued because she believed that Pathfinder was about to cut her funding level. (Subsequent talks with Pathfinder in the US convinced me that this was not the case.)

Nancy and Francisco showed me the results of a survey they had conducted in order to determine the impact of CROF's radio programs in La Paz and Santa Cruz. In general, the data indicate that an audience exists for family planning and development radio programs. CROF broadcasts programs not only in Spanish but also in Aymara for the indigenous people in the area surrounding La Paz.

CROF's programs not only give general advice and consultation but they also refer people to a private clinic, Clínica México. I visited the clinic and talked to its owner and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Corsino Aguilar. Clínica México is located in one of the "barrios populares" of La Paz. Dr. Aguilar receives no financial support from any organization in order to subsidize his services for the poor people. He uses his position as head of the Obstetrics/Gynecology Department of the San Andrés Medical School to recruit interns for his clinic. He also is one of the trainers (and training site) for a project sponsored by Pathfinder through the Centro de Investigaciones Sociales.

Dr. Aguilar initially thought I was connected with JHPIEGO as he requested from me a long list of medical supplies, including a laparoscope, IUDs and disposable clinic materials. Once we cleared up the misunderstanding I talked with him about IEC. Dr. Aguilar said that he thought the IEC activities that were proposed through the COF project were good but did not go far enough. He stated that there was also a need for academic materials for medical students and some kind of bulletin on health and family planning issues which should be published each month for the medical community. Dr. Aguilar also expressed a need for films, for doctors and users, plus additional copies of Population Reports to be distributed to the doctors and students that he trains. (Dr. Aguilar will receive 30 copies of future Population Reports.)

Dr. Aguilar confirmed what other doctors had told me about the IUD being the preferred contraceptive method in Bolivia. He stated five succinct reasons why IUDs are the number one contraceptive method in Bolivia: 1) one time cost to the user; 2) lack of education on how to correctly use the pill, which leads to high "failure" rates; 3) rumors about the pill; 4) high costs of injectables; and 5) no acceptance of barrier methods due to cultural taboos.

### Sociedad Boliviana de Reproducción Humana

I had one meeting with the President of SBRH, Dr. Eduardo Castillo, and several of his staff members. SBRH had just completed the field work on a contraceptive prevalence study sponsored by Westinghouse Health Systems and was finalizing the data analysis. Two staff members left the day after I talked with them to come to the US to work with Westinghouse on the data analysis.

Eduardo explained to me that SBRH was very interested in forming a federation of private sector family planning organizations with the idea of promoting better cooperation and coordination between the institutions. Eduardo had approached AID and IPPF/WHR with this idea and received favorable feedback from them. Eduardo said that he was organizing a meeting for March 1984 where both the Bolivian family planning organizations and the international donor agencies would be invited to participate. He said that IPPF/WHR would be interested in funding such a meeting. (A separate discussion with COF on the same theme disclosed that they also were trying to organize a meeting of a similar nature but its target date was August 1984.)

Eduardo was very interested in establishing a more in-depth working relationship with JHU/PCS. I explained to him that due to funding constraints I was unable to develop a project with him at this time. However, I did tell him about the COF project and that he would be welcome to any of the materials produced under that project. Eduardo said that the IEC activities that we were proposing were fundamentally sound but he would recommend even more activities. As an example he mentioned requests he has from the National Police Labor Union which has more than 13,000 families as members and 7,000 rural families in a community in the Oruro region. BSRH needs assistance in the development of a curriculum and methodology for conducting seminars and talks on family planning and related themes. They also need print materials including leaflets and flipcharts. They would like to support these actions with radio programs. I asked Eduardo, since his organization is not organized to do this type of activity, why he did not pass the requests on to COF. He said that this was not possible because the people involved know and trust only his organization. When asked about the possibility of a joint venture with COF, he also was reluctant to accept this alternative.

Eduardo requested JHU/PCS assistance in two other activities: 1) the funding of seminars in each region of the country in order to diffuse the findings of the contraceptive prevalence survey; and 2) the funding of newspaper articles which would be written by doctors and other prominent citizens on family planning and population issues.

### Centro de Investigaciones Sociales

I met once with the Director of CIS, Dr. Antonio Cisneros, and several of his staff members. Antonio was very anxious to develop a project with JHU/PCS because all of the projects that CIS is currently undertaking will end this year. He brought me up-to-date on the status of each project and what they are accomplishing vis-à-vis the project's goals and objectives. I told Antonio that I was not able to develop a specific project with his organization at the present time but explained to him how he could participate and benefit from the project we will develop with COF. He expressed disappointment but understood the economics of the situation.

We did talk about the types of projects JHU/PCS may be interested in funding at a later date. One of the current projects of CIS is a diagnosis of youth-oriented organizations in the La Paz area to determine if they are providing or are interested in providing orientation to adolescents about the sexuality and contraception. Once the study is completed, CIS will send us a proposal based upon its findings. CIS also would like JHU/PCS to consider developing several short videotape programs which would rotate from pharmacy to pharmacy. This project would increase the distribution of contraceptive information using modern technology but not through a mass medium where it might be subject to criticism. CIS would also like to establish itself as a training organization. In this context it would train trainers from other organizations in family planning and other related themes. They would require assistance in the development of audio-visual aids which would be used in the training program.

CIS had requested films from JHU/PCS and had received three by the time of my visit. A subsequent check on my return to the US showed that all the films had been sent to them but at different times due to some being out-of-stock.

Carmen Cisneros, CIS Librarian, requested a folder to keep their copies of Population Reports in a neat and protected manner. A binder was provided by the Population Information Program.

#### Ministerio de Planeamiento y Coordinación

Prior to my departure from the US I talked to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Coordinator for Bolivia, Mr. George Walmsley. He explained in general about UNFPA activities with the Ministerio de Planeamiento y Coordinación (MIPCO). He suggested that I talk to the Vice Minister, Lic. Carlos Carafa, and the acting Project Director, Lic. José Baldía, about their communication plans and activities in the field of population.

During the time of my visit, Lic. Carafa was out of the country so I met exclusively with Lic. Baldía. He explained that the UNFPA-sponsored project was five years old and was now approaching the third stage. The first stage of the project included a diagnosis of the population problem in Bolivia. This initial investigation of the data revealed, among other facts, that: the fertility rate

(from the 1976 census) was 6.5 live births; the infant mortality rate was 213 per 1,000 live births with some parts of the country reaching 360 per 1,000 live births; and that 80 percent of the population lived in 30 percent of the territory.

The second stage of the project was designed to develop a prognosis of the population problem built around the data discovered in the first stage. Some of the projections included: the poorer segment of the Bolivian society was reproducing the most quickly; there was an ever increasing number of young people in the society and the government would not be able to provide social services for them nor would either the public or private sectors be able to generate enough jobs to give them employment opportunities; and there existed a large imbalance in the distribution of wealth in the country and this problem would only be exacerbated by population trends.

The third stage of the project began in 1982 and is intended to continue through 1987. The purpose of this stage is to have the government adopt a population policy. It is anticipated that this stage will institutionalize population as part of the development plans of different Ministries. The current 1984-1987 development plans already include population related activities for many of the government's Ministries. To assist in the development of a population policy, MIPCO's strategy calls for a series of activities to support the attainment of the project's goals. Some of these activities are: 1) a series of seminars on population and development for key public, private and church leaders; 2) television programs on population issues; 3) radio programs and spots about population and development; 4) slide/tape shows on population; and 5) print materials about population for a mass audience.

The MIPCO Population Department is also studying means to introduce sex education as part of the in-school curriculum. Due to heavy resistance within the Ministry of Education (MOE), MIPCO is working with a separate unit of the MOE, Servicio Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación Popular (National Literacy and Popular Education Service).

Lic. Baldívia was very interested in establishing a formal relationship with JHU/PCS. He requested films which cover population and related issues. He thought films would be very beneficial for use with nurses, teachers, health promoters and opinion leaders. MIPCO would also like audio-visual equipment, such as slide projectors, audio cassette player/recorders and video projectors and recorders.

I explained to Lic. Baldívia about our limitations for funding additional projects in Latin America and where the JHU/PCS priorities lie within these limitations. Under these conditions I promised to send him: copies of appropriate films that we have; a copy of the speakers' presentations at our Quito conference (in addition to keeping his organization in mind as a possible participant in any other conference we organize in Latin America); and the results of a Popline search on Population Communication in Latin America.

We discussed one possible project. This project would be a series of seminars for communication staff members of different governmental agencies. The purpose would be to improve their communication skills and introduce them to family planning concepts. Lic. Baldívia believes this is one way that a broad base of support for the creation of a national population policy and subsequent actions in family planning can be obtained. Later, I learned, AID/Bolivia would not support this project.

#### United States Information Service

I met briefly with the United States Information Service (USIS) Press Chief, Mr. Jorge Noya. Mr. Noya provided me with some background information on the development of the press, radio and television media in Bolivia. He has worked for many years in the communication field and has five years experience in community development. Some of the insights Mr. Noya provided include: 1) radio is the medium which best reaches the rural people in Bolivia; 2) early morning is the best time of day for using the radio to reach rural people; 3) Bolivians are very religious but it is a curious mixture of primitive beliefs (such as animism) mixed with Catholicism; 4) any development activities in a rural community should take into the account the community's perception of its own needs; 5) print material does not need to be developed in indigenous languages;

and 6) more than 250,000 people view television on a regular basis and this includes a large percentage of people in the rural areas of the country.

Mr. Noya expressed a desire to collaborate with JHU/PCS in any way possible. He offered the offset printer that USIS owns and his own contacts in the media. He also gave me "ballpark" figures on the cost of radio and television time. I also asked him about Bolivian advertising agencies. (A list is attached to this report.) Mr. Noya said there were some good ones in the country but they have little or no experience in developing social development communication materials and he was not sure how they would react to managing a family planning communication campaign.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

I was truly amazed at the difference in Bolivia in the nine months that had passed between my last visit and this one. There are very real opportunities in family planning that should be capitalized upon by JHU/PCS. The economic crisis and the general deterioration of social services in the country have encouraged the demand for family planning services and IEC. This is not to say that one can be indiscreet in IEC, but rather, it indicates that through careful preparation, messages can be widely disseminated via any medium throughout the country.

I specifically recommend that JHU/PCS:

- 1) fund the project proposal that was developed with COF. This project will be the first effort to actively promote family planning in Bolivia by other than traditional interpersonal communication channels. Not only will the family planning users be supported by this project but it also has the potential to more than double the number of users in the country, if the service delivery system can handle the increase in the demand.

- 2) seek additional funding to support the communication efforts of other private sector family planning organizations. Each of the three principal organizations (excluding COF) expressed a desire to become more active in family planning IEC. Some of their ideas could be quite productive to the overall national family planning program's efforts. CIS' interest in adolescent fertility, SBHR's desire to disseminate the contraceptive prevalence survey's findings, and CROF's radio programs are all examples of good IEC activities that JHU/PCS is currently unable to fund.
- 3) seek additional funding for a series of communication workshops sponsored by MIPCO's Population Department, if it submits a proposal to JHU/PCS. The workshops would not only improve the communication abilities of the government's program managers but also introduce them to population and family planning in a very positive environment. These people are key to any improvement in the official government position in this area.
- 4) encourage efforts by the private sector to establish a federation. Bolivia can use Ecuador as a model for good coordination and collaboration by the private sector while each member institution maintains its individual identity. A federation will tend to maximize the scarce resources that exist in the country and among the international donors.
- 5) seek clearance for all proposed projects from AID/Bolivia.

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