

FINAL REPORT

Partner: *World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)*

Project Title and project number: *Building Communication Rights to Access Social Services S-065169*

Funding: *Joint CIDA WACC project*

Actual start date and end date of activities: 15 July 2011 – 31 May 2013

31 May 2013

Precis

This project aimed at engaging and training two groups of marginalised people in Bolivia (Aymara Indigenous people and people with disabilities) in the development and use of a Communication Rights Index. The project supported marginalised groups to work with authorities and local stakeholders to enhance access to social and economic services.

The project took place entirely in Bolivia in the cities of La Paz and Ciudad de El Alto and the municipalities of Tiwanacu, Viacha and Pucarani. The Aymara Indigenous people component was implemented in Ciudad de El Alto, and the municipalities of Tiwanacu, Viacha and Pucarani. The people with disabilities component was implemented in La Paz and Ciudad de El Alto.

Sectors:

Democratic participation and civil society (015150): 50%

Human rights (015160): 50%

Main partners on the ground were:

1. Centro de Educación y Comunicación para Pueblos Indígenas – Communication Centre for Indigenous Peoples and Communities (CECOPI), Director: Ms Tania Ayma

and,

2. Servicio de Capacitación en Radio y Televisión para el Desarrollo – The Radio and TV for Development Service (SECRAD - a unit of the Catholic University of Bolivia)
Programme Manager: Ms. Roxana Roca; Director: Prof. José Luis Aguirre

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This end of project report gives an account of the implementation and the results of a two-year project called Building Communication Rights to Access Social Services implemented by the World Association for Christian Communication (**WACC**), and its two partners Education and Communication Centre for Indigenous Peoples and Communities (**CECOPI**) and Servicio de Capacitación en Radio y TV para el Desarrollo (**SECRAD**) between 2011 and 2013 in Bolivia, South America.

Aim and strategy

The project aimed to enable two historically marginalised groups in Bolivia to understand and use communication and information rights to work towards gaining better access to social services including health, education, housing and employment. The project worked with indigenous Aymara women, men and youth in four locations (El Alto, Tiwanacu, Viacha and Pucarani) and with disability organisations and individuals in two locations (La Paz and El Alto) using a capacity-building approach. Beneficiaries were trained in communication rights and their relationship to other human rights, and the links between these particular rights and the attainment of other rights, including women's rights and gender equality. They also learned about the function and role of media in influencing policy and decision-making, and about how to work positively with media. The project included the development of a Communication Rights Index as a tool for measuring the extent of communication rights in Bolivia in relation to the two groups of beneficiaries.

The project originated in previous work undertaken by WACC separately with both partners and which laid the foundations for this joint project. The Indigenous people's component was the responsibility of CECOPI while SECRAD was the group which worked with people with disabilities.

CECOPI is an Indigenous Aymara organization run by and for Aymaras in District 8 of Ciudad de El Alto and the municipalities of Tiwanacu, Viacha and Pucarani.

The La Paz-based SECRAD is not a disability organization, but one that has partnered with disability groups in order to work on communication and disability. Their work in this area is unique in Bolivia and it has led to the creation of a style manual for journalists on how to cover disability, a radio producing skills training program for visually impaired people, and a number of activities within the Bolivian Catholic University which have firmly introduced the issue of disability and communication in the university, as well as among public opinion in the country.

Until recently disability has been a non-visible issue in Bolivia. A report prepared by the Canadian Organization Disability Rights Promotion International stated that, in 2009, discrimination against disabled people in Bolivia, at all levels, was still very much a reality.

Summary of Results Achieved and Performance

Disability Component

77 male and 65 female of different ages and with disabilities (PWD) (PWD) living in La Paz and Ciudad de El Alto have gained new knowledge to claim their right to communication and information (RTCI) in order to attain better access to their rights and entitlements in education, health, housing and employment.

PWD living in La Paz and Ciudad de El Alto have been empowered and have increased confidence and knowledge to advocate for their rights. They have new awareness and understanding and are able to express these as demonstrated in public events and fairs as well as in encounters and workshops.

Organizations of PWD living in La Paz and Ciudad de El Alto have a new understanding of the importance and role of mass media and are able to interact with media in order to pursue better and fairer representation of people with disabilities.

SECRAD has established an inter-institutional agreement with Bolivia's National Confederation of Peoples with Disabilities, (CONALPEDIS) and the Bolivian Institute for Blind People (IBC)

Under the theme "People Above All" people with disabilities have advocated successfully during 8 advocacy campaigns for their specific needs in education, health, housing and employment and for better access to those services.

Organizations of PWD have access to a media monitoring manual prepared with the collaboration of eleven media professionals.

Eleven media professional have made a personal commitment to continue covering issues of disabilities and PWD rights.

PWD have access to documents which articulate Bolivia's existing legal framework of disabled people's right, including the new disability law promulgated in March 2012 by Bolivia.

Production of 6 reports, are available for PWD and the public in general: Baseline Report; Manual on communication and disability; Self-determination and Leadership and People with Disabilities; Media Monitoring Manual; Booklet on UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and Article 12 of Bolivia's New Disability Legislation,; Index

Indigenous Aymara Component

71 female and 32 male Indigenous Aymaras living in Tiwanacu, Ciudad de El Alto, Viacha and Pucarani have increased knowledge about their rights in the areas of education, health, housing and employment and have begun to understand their right to communication and information (RTCI) and to speak of this new right to other people in their communities.

Indigenous Aymaras living in Tiwanacu, Ciudad de El Alto, Viacha and Pucarani have established links with local decision-makers in those communities and have increased confidence and new skills in formulating advocacy actions.

Indigenous Aymaras living in Tiwanacu, Ciudad de El Alto, Viacha and Pucarani have new understandings of the importance and role of the mass media and know how to evaluate mass media representation of indigenous people as well as how to engage the media.

Indigenous Aymara living in Tiwanacu, Viacha, Pucarani and Ciudad de El Alto have completed an audio visual pilot advocacy campaigns using Radio Chaca, Radio Letanias, Radio Kollasuyo and Canal 18 TV as well as Viacha's TV Channel. The audiovisual campaigns were accompanied by leaflets distributed in meetings, public events and to the public in general in the four communities.

Indigenous Aymara living in Tiwanacu, Viacha, Pucarani and Ciudad de El Alto have advocated for their specific needs in education, health, housing and employment and for better access to those services.

A seven minutes documentary on the project and the RTCI has been produced and distributed in the communities that did not directly benefitted from the project.

Indigenous Aymara have tested and validated the Index of the RTCI to monitor local government accountability in relation to education, health, housing and employment services.

Indigenous Aymara living in Tiwanacu, Viacha, Pucarani, and Ciudad de El Alto know the authorities and have established working relationships and synergies with local decision makers, including ombudsman and city mayors as well as local authorities' Human Development Officers. They all acknowledge that participants in the project are recognized as key people and opinion leaders for the authorities to understand and know what the population is thinking and demanding of its local authorities.

Indigenous Aymara living in Tiwanacu, Viacha, Pucarani and Ciudad de El Alto have access to a manual explaining what the media is and are better able to understand its

role in influencing policy and decision making, and they are able to identify and understand how to assess media representation of indigenous people and how to relate to the media.

Indigenous Aymara living in Tiwanacu, Viacha, Pucarani and Ciudad de El Alto have contributed to the developing of a media monitoring tool.

Media professionals working in radios with large audiences in Indigenous Aymara communities have made a commitment to discuss the beneficiaries' demands and needs, including Indigenous Aymara women and have begun to speak themselves of the RTCI of Indigenous people and explain it to other people.

Production of 5 reports and audiovisual materials are available for the beneficiaries as well as the general public: Base line, Bulletin the Right to Communication and Information, Basic Media Monitoring Manual, Training Manual on the Right to Communication and Information and Index. (

During the course of the project, it became necessary to change one of the municipal locations from Coroico to Viacha. The expected outcomes and output statements were modified accordingly.

Summary of Key Lessons Learned

Disability Component

The theme of the project was new for organizations of PWD and one that they need to continue to work on since they had never explored the role of and need for communication in their work.

The existence of two components in the project, disability and Indigenous Aymara, made it difficult to have a single, unified approach and to apply the same logic to both components.

It is not possible to have a single criterion when working with the representatives of the four disabilities (intellectual, visual, hearing and physical). Attention needs to be given to specific needs and different understandings.

Indigenous Aymara

With regard to the Indigenous Component, the lessons learned included the need to prioritize working in alliance with other groups and networks and to spend time creating awareness of the need for such alliances, networking and cooperation.

It is important to assign adequate time to training processes since short time periods are insufficient, especially when the training involves working with new concepts and ideas.

Particularly in the context of Bolivia, the gender equality strategy must include males. The dominant social order has in practice created a male stereotype which informs and conditions the male presence. It is also important to include the colonial past to fully understand Bolivia's current social order and the levels of exclusion and marginalization it presents. This was not originally part of a cross-cutting strategy but by the end of the project its importance and relevance was clearly evident.

Recommendations

Disabilities Component

Organisations of PWD need to review their internal policies regarding communication and information if they are going to be able to empower their members.

It is urgent and necessary to make efforts to strengthen the programmatic work of organizations of PWD.

It is urgent and necessary to support cooperation between organizations of people with disabilities in Bolivia to improve their ability to exercise strong and effective leadership and purposeful presence in decision-making, in coordinating instances and in public policy formulation. Working committees established by the government to implement public policies related to disabilities should be composed equally of people with and people without disabilities.

The State needs to launch advocacy actions jointly with organizations of PWD in order to promote a positive social image of people with disabilities. These actions should have a gender dimension.

The State needs to ensure the collection of statistics pertaining to disability and this information needs to be constantly updated and widely communicated.

The issue of disabilities, communication and use of new communication technologies (ITCs) needs to be worked on continuously and expanded to ensure wide participation of people with disabilities in society.

Indigenous Aymara Component

It is highly important and urgent to begin a longer process of reflection on the right to communication and information which is included in the Bolivian Constitution. The way in which this right is portrayed in the Constitution reveals a trade unions and journalists'

approach. In this context it creates difficulties since it seems to represent the right of journalists and media professionals rather than the possibility of self-expression for all sectors of society. This is point that needs further and longer term discussion than was possible in this project.

It is important to think about and highlight the issue of equality as a process of leveling. During the project it was noted that in State norms and regulations and even in the Constitution itself, equality before the law is assumed as a given. The project partners believe that this is not enough since in reality inequalities continue to pervade the social order. Efforts need to be made to develop processes that contribute, concretely to achieving equality. It is not sufficient for the Constitution to acknowledge the right to communication and information but rather it is important to begin processes which will ensure that the right will be a reality.

Finally, it is recommended that in order to make this project's outcomes sustainable and the processes it has started, it is necessary to maintain networks and alliances and to build on the experiences and work achieved.

OPERATIONS

Project Description

Partners: The World Association for Christian Communication (**WACC**), Education and Communication Centre for Indigenous Peoples and Communities (**CECOPI**) and Servicio de Capacitación en Radio y TV para el Desarrollo (**SECRAD**).

WACC is an international non-governmental organisation that promotes communication both for social change and as a basic human right, giving preference to the needs of the poor, marginalised and vulnerable. It has been active in development cooperation for more than 25 years. During the last three years, WACC has worked in partnership with over 200 secular and faith-based organisations, mainly from developing countries, in advocacy, education, capacity-building, training, and the creation and sharing of knowledge.

A staff from eight countries bring a broad range of cultural literacy support to WACC's activities in English, French and Spanish and other languages when needed. An active membership network in 125 countries led by regional leadership committees in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, North America and the Pacific provides an additional source of expertise that contributes to the shaping and, in some cases, the implementation of WACC's development cooperation.

WACC was a pioneer in the right to communicate movement, working closely with the Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS) Campaign in the build up to the 2003 and 2005 United Nations-led World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). WACC has extensive experience of communication rights projects carried out in partnership with civil society organisations in the global South. It also has a worldwide network of communicators in professional and academic positions. This project has the potential to be replicated together with other partners and disseminated among researchers and practitioners in many different contexts.

WACC has long argued that communication rights strengthen the capacity of people and communities to use communication and media to pursue their goals in the economic, political, social, and cultural spheres. Communication rights support key human rights that collectively enable people to communicate in their own general interest and for the common good.

Communication rights go beyond freedom of opinion and expression to include areas such as democratization of the media, democratic governance, participation in one's own culture, linguistic rights, and the right to education, privacy, peaceful assembly, and self-determination. These are questions of inclusion and participation, of equality and accessibility in any given society. Communication rights are accepted as third-generation human rights – those rights that go beyond the first generation of liberty and participation in political life, and the second generation of social, economic, and cultural equality. Third generation human rights include group and collective rights and are essential for good governance and genuine democratic societies.

The project empowered the beneficiaries to make the links between the right to communication and information and national and local development processes. Empowered in this way, the beneficiaries were able to see the right to communication and information as a tool which facilitates access to knowledge and information and therefore enables them to better participate in the democratic life of the country and of the community. It also enables them to understand that communication lies at the very heart of democratic participation and all social change.

Bolivia was chosen as the country in which to implement the project for a number of reasons, including the fact that in earlier years and through three different small projects, WACC had already established successful partnerships to work on issues of communication rights with both Bolivian partners and their constituencies, Indigenous Aymara and people with disabilities. The Aymara is one of the two largest groups among the 36 nations of Indigenous peoples of Bolivia. The success of the partnerships translated into sustained and continued work with both Indigenous Aymara, in particular Aymara women, and with people with disabilities.

CECOPI (Education and Communication Centre for Indigenous Peoples and Communities) is an Indigenous Aymara organization run by and for Aymaras in Ciudad de El Alto. It acts as a community development organization for Aymaras living in Ciudad de El Alto and the surrounding areas and runs a community radio station 'Radio Atipiri'. In 2006/2007 WACC and CECOPI organized a one year course to provide radio skills training to Indigenous women who became some of the radio's 'popular reporters' sending information and producing programs about their own rural and/or urban communities. The popular reporters continue to provide voluntary services to Radio Atipiri. Run by an Aymara woman communicator, CECOPI established a high level of credibility among Aymara people in Ciudad de El Alto and surrounding municipalities. Ciudad de El Alto is a sprawling city in the outskirts of La Paz which grew out of migration from rural and poverty stricken areas and where there are high levels of conflicts. CECOPI has good working relations with the local office of the Defensor del Pueblo (the Ombudsman) and he endorsed the project by participating in some of the activities.

CECOPI is a legally registered not for profit civil association, created in 1997 in La Paz, The Director is a woman. It has a functioning board made up of 4 people; a permanent financial administrator; and a newly expanded multi-story building including several offices, training rooms, production studio, broadcasting studio, reception, storage room and garage. The group regularly assesses the needs of their audiences and beneficiaries and it evaluates every activity undertaken at the end. CECOPI has extensive experience of implementing communication training and capacity building activities as well as gender training with international donors such as Advisory Committee of the Andalucía Board (Spain); Regional Government of Sevilla (Spain), Regional Government of Córdoba (Spain); Spanish International Cooperation Agency, Regional Government of Huelva (Spain); PCI-Media Impact (USA); Association of Municipal and Community Radio and Television in Andalucía and Sevilla (Spain). In 2007 CECOPI participated in an international consultation with WACC partners.

While SECRAD (Servicio de Capacitación en Radio y TV para el Desarrollo) is not a disability organization it has partnered with disability groups in order to work on issues of communication and disability. Its work in the area is unique in Bolivia and with support from WACC has led to the creation of style manual for mainstream journalists on how to cover disability as well as a radio producing skills program for visually impaired people. Created in 1986 SECRAD is a department of the School of Communications of the Bolivian Catholic University of San Pablo, specializing in communication and development. It has several core staff members (director, secretary, audio and video technicians) and other consultants as needed. A number of volunteers work regularly for SECRAD as consultants for specific programmes. It works at a national level. All SECRAD activities are managed by the University authorities. Its budget is part of the university budget. It has five offices as well as a teaching room and fully equipped studios for audio as well as video production studio. SECRAD has experience in providing audio-visual communication training to popular, indigenous communicators, and grassroots groups working in alternative and community media. It has implemented communication projects with a number of international bodies (UNESCO, UNICEF, International Development Programme for Development Communication, UNIFEM, United Nations Population Fund, PCI-Media Impact USA, Field Museum of Chicago, World Bank Institute, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, World Association of Community Radios), Latin American Institute of Social Development , Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation German Service for Social-Technical Cooperation, Concordia University of Montreal, World Health Organisation/Pan American Health Organisation. WACC partnership with SECRAD: in 2006 it was the host organisation for a seminar of Latin American communicators looking at the media and fundamentalism. In 2007 and 2009 WACC partnered with SECRAD to implement two projects dealing with communication and disability. During the first one SECRAD worked both with professional communicators and with people with disabilities to produce a training manual on how to cover issues of disabilities. During the second one SECRAD provided communication training for people with disabilities.

In choosing to work on issues of communication and disabilities SECRAD has been a pioneer. Until recently disability has been such an invisible and hidden issue in Bolivia that even government statistics on disabilities were not that extensive. A 2009 country report on Bolivia prepared by the Toronto-based organisation Disability Rights Promotion International highlighted the fact that official discrimination against people with disabilities was still a reality, in the workplace, in schools, in access to healthcare system and in access to government services. The report stated that disability, “has not become a subject of public interest, nor has the government prioritized its inclusion in the governmental agenda or in that of civil society”. Disability, according to the report, “has been treated as a private issue, confined to the inner family spaces” and “policy-makers, authorities, government officials, and social actors in general are unaware of

improvement in the relevant laws and regulations; in other words, the regulations are not enforced at all.”¹

In March 2012, after severe public protests by people with disabilities lasting several months, the Bolivian government approved a new General Law on Disabilities, which ought to contribute to improving the situation of disabled people in Bolivia allowing them to claim their full rights and entitlement in society. Within this context the Right to Communication and Information (RTCI) is essential if the systematic isolation, which is reproduced in all spheres of life, and which results from disability-based discrimination is to be broken

Rationale

The social and political context of the country was a decisive factor in choosing Bolivia to develop the project. WACC recognized that the 2005 election of Evo Morales, the country's first indigenous president facilitated profound social and political changes which are transforming old patterns of power in Bolivia where vast sectors of the population have been historically marginalized. Bolivia's 2009 Constitution acknowledges and guarantees rights which open the way for the establishment of a much more democratic, equal, just and plural society in which new social actors are taking active part at all levels of society. Bolivian civil society itself is undergoing profound changes and, for the very first time, historically marginalized sectors are now central to the social and political as well as economic life of the country.

In terms of rights the 2009 Constitution clearly defines education, health and housing as fundamental rights (Arts 17, 18 and 19) while Articles 106 and 107 recognize and guarantee the right to communication and information. The right to communication and to information are important gains for strengthening civil society and especially the participation of marginalized people.

The new, plurinational Bolivia being envisaged is inspired by the indigenous concept of “living life well” (Suma Qamaña concept in Aymara and Sumaj Kaysay in Quechua) encouraging inclusion and transparency affording a unique and favourable opportunity for marginalised sectors to claim their long neglected rights and entitlements. Monitoring these rights in practice and giving them shape brings closer a real opportunity to put the right to communicate into effect in ways that enable indigenous people and people with disabilities to express their needs, contribute to and benefit from social and economic development and empowers them to demand and fully exercise their rights as citizens.

Bolivia's “National Development Plan (PDN): A dignified, sovereign, productive and democratic Bolivia to Live Well” is the document that provides the wider framework within which Bolivian's sector development plans have been framed. The far reaching goals of the PDN are to develop sustainable and holistic social, cultural and economic policies and strategies to create and support a more egalitarian Bolivia where levels of

¹ Confederación Boliviana de la Persona con Discapacidad (C.O.B.O.P.D.I.), 2009, “Monitoring The Human Rights of People with Disabilities Country Report: Bolivia” Disability Rights Promotion International (D.R.P.I.), York University, Canada

poverty are substantially reduced and the quality of life of marginalised, vulnerable and traditionally excluded populations is substantially improved. Housing, education, health and employment are all key elements of the fight against poverty and marginalisation. Communication rights play an important role to allow the very people who will benefit from these changed circumstances to monitor how well the new policies and strategies are being implemented.

Having recognized the favourable Bolivian political and social context, WACC and the partners also saw that laws and other legal dispositions needed to be made explicit and knowledge about such rights and the entitlements they confer on the population needed to be widely disseminated. This led to a proposal that envisaged on the one hand establishing a baseline to document existing knowledge about rights and entitlements in the areas of education, employment, health, and housing among the target population and on the other, providing them with knowledge about the media and the role media play in shaping public agendas.

In addition to the favourable socio-political environment WACC's two partners are organisations which have relevant expertise and experience. WACC has had successful partnerships with both groups, as referred to above.

The project Building Communication Rights to Access Social Services was first discussed at length during a 2010 visit to Bolivia by WACC's Communication Rights program manager. The staff member spent a week in La Paz working with SECRAD and CECOPI to develop a joint proposal. During the visit the program manager also met with members of the Bolivian Institute for the Blind and other disability organizations. Throughout the process of preparing the proposal for submission to CIDA the partners were kept fully informed and feedback from them was regularly sought.

The project began with the creation of a small project management committee to provide support to the two Bolivia-based project consultants responsible for each component. The project management committee included two Canada based staff and was chaired by the program manager overseeing the project. Online meetings of the management team took place monthly throughout the implementation period of the project and sometimes twice monthly. The online meetings were complemented by email exchanges and telephone calls. Each of the consultants worked with a small team of contract staff and volunteers. In the case of the disability component, one of the researchers was a disabled woman.

The project involved designing, producing and distributing information materials to explain the project and invite participation. This was followed by information seminars in District 8 of Ciudad de El Alto as well as in the communities of Tiwanacu, Coroico and Pucarani and in La Paz to expand on the purpose of the project and to recruit participants.

Having selected the participants both partners conducted research to produce a baseline study to establish the level of participants' awareness of communication rights and entitlements and to assess participants' needs regarding full implementation of rights.

The research was followed by training workshops in Ciudad del Alto, Tiwanacu, Pucarani and Viacha as well as in La Paz to help participants understand the concept of the right to communication and information and to explore the links between those rights and the attainment of rights and entitlements regarding education, housing, health and employment.

Several public fairs, a well established mechanism in Bolivia to raise awareness in the wider community, followed and pilot advocacy campaigns related to the right to education, employment, health and housing were organized and took place.

Having gained insights into communication rights and increased their knowledge about existing rights as well as community discussions on the different factors, it was important for participants to link their knowledge and insights to a wider understanding regarding the role played by the mass media in society, how they can influence policy and decision-making, and how they can contribute to the circulation of ideas as well as influencing collective understandings. Two workshops were held for this purpose. Media literacy and media monitoring techniques were also part of the capacity building as were two dialogue sessions with mass media representatives as well as professionals (journalists, broadcasters, editors).

The project staff documented the understandings and scope of the right to communication and information in Bolivia, and identified the components of the right to communication and information which responded to the beneficiaries needs in the areas of education, health, housing and employment. Based on these components, a Communication Rights Index (CRI) was designed by SECRAD and CECOPI. The Aymara beneficiaries of the project were to be trained on how to use the Index in their communities after having taken part in a verification exercise.

Progress on Implementation

Overall the Annual Work Plans for year 1 and year 2 were completed. However the pace of implementation varied between the two components of the project.

In the case of SECRAD and the work with people with disabilities, the group was able to adhere more strictly to the work plan drafted at the beginning of the project. At the same time the university structure within which SECRAD exists created constraints in that the release of funds from WACC to the University of San Pablo which then released them to SECRAD sometimes took longer than originally expected and created delays.

CECOPI encountered more problems in maintaining the schedule, which was quite delayed requiring subsequent scheduling of activities. This was due to several causes.

All work with Indigenous Aymara is mediated by the structures of their own social organizations and Traditional Authorities in a way that does not necessarily happen with other social groups. Each Aymara community elects a new set of leaders every year. Sometimes the newly elected leaders do not necessarily honour the commitments made by previous authorities. Or, if they are willing to honour them, they want to discuss them

again and review all the details of the original commitment. Given that project S-065169 was originally submitted on 26 August 2010 and WACC was finally notified of the project's approval in May 2011, this process of having to inform and get the approval of the new Traditional Authorities had to take place in 2010 (during the planning of the project), in 2011 and again in 2012. Despite this, the authorities in the municipalities of Pucarani, Viacha, Tiwanacu and El Alto did reach inter-institutional agreements with CECOPI and the activities did go ahead albeit sometimes severely delayed.

A further element which contributed to the delay has been the Indigenous Aymara's own process of empowerment resulting from the election several years ago of the country's first Indigenous president. This historical event which has witnessed an unprecedented commitment on the part of a national government to the involvement and participation of marginalized sectors in the social, political and economic life of the country has greatly accelerated the empowerment of all the Indigenous peoples of Bolivia. While this is a most welcome development, it has also meant that the Traditional Authorities and Indigenous social organizations have been engaged in a way in which they have not been before, thus leaving less time to dedicate to the development of new programs.

Delays have also taken place because historically the expectations of the beneficiary population have largely been to "receive tangible results" when participating in a project with a foreign donor. At each explanatory meeting with new Traditional Authorities the importance of "non-tangible results", such as rights, knowledge and understandings of how society functions, had to be re-explained and re-negotiated. In itself, this confirms the need for and importance of programs aimed at contributing to the development of analytical and reflective processes among the beneficiary population if they are going to become fully empowered citizens.

Another factor that contributed to the delayed implementation with the Indigenous Aymara group was the 2012 Census, which required the main Indigenous Traditional Authorities to participate in lengthy workshops aimed at consulting with them first on how the Census would be implemented in their communities and, second, the re-allocation of municipal budgets according to the new population Census. The latter led to conflicts in several of the municipalities and this has affected even those municipalities where there had been deep revisions of municipal expenditure.

Despite these delays, CECOPI managed to complete all activities, including the Index of the Right to Communicate from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples.

Management Issues:

The project was managed by two Canada-based staff: a project manager and a finance/funding officer. The disability component was managed by a project coordinator, responsible for SECRAD's programme on communication and disability while the Indigenous Aymara component was coordinated by CECOPI's director, an Aymara woman.

The disability project coordinator was based in La Paz while the Indigenous Aymara project coordinator was based in Ciudad de El Alto. Each project coordinator worked with a finance administrative support assistant who were also present during the online meetings.

The four-person management committee met on line initially every two weeks. When necessary these online meetings were followed by email and/or telephone.

As the project progressed, different schedules as well as different quality of access to Internet technology in La Paz and in Ciudad de El Alto made it more difficult to bring together all six people at the same time. Therefore it soon became necessary to schedule separate online meetings with the two partners. This practice was continued until the end of the project.

The Canadian based project manager visited the project and the partners in 2012 and met with Canadian Embassy in La Paz, the Bolivian National Deputy Ombudsman, responsible for disability in the country as well as the local Ombudsman for Ciudad de El Alto. The project manager was also able to visit two of the localities where the project was being implemented, Pucarani and Ciudad de El Alto.

A second visit was made in April 2013 by the Director of Programmes and WACC's Deputy General Secretary which included meetings with the project partners, several disability organisations in La Paz, and with participants in El Alto and Tiwanacu.

While the style of management of the project lent itself to creation of good, transparent and cooperative relations within the management group, the fact that the project had two components (people with disabilities and Indigenous Aymara) presented problems in that the realities of each of the beneficiaries were so very different.

On the one hand we had a partner that worked with historically marginalised people who since 2006 have been living a fast and growing and unique process of empowerment which has put them at the centre of the country's political stage.

On the other hand we were working with a partner that works with a sector of the population which has been highly marginalised and until recently, highly absent from the public agenda by virtue of their 'invisibility' as a sector of society.

The vastly different levels of initial awareness and needs between the two beneficiary groups meant that the work of coordination and coaching of the colleagues working on the disability component had to be much more intense than that of the colleagues working with Indigenous people.

Though the person leading the disability component was herself highly conversant with disability issues and rights she had much less experience in working with international agencies and reporting outcomes, activities, etc. in the manner required by agencies. This has meant that Canada based staff had to request regularly that the information and updates be re-submitted and rendered in the language and the terms used in development work, following the Logic Model, etc.

Risks

At the outset WACC and the partners discussed the risks that we might face during the implementation of the project. The original Risk Assessment was, overall, a correct one.

However, neither WACC nor the partners foresaw how social disruptions which have been affecting La Paz for the last year and a half would affect the implementation of the project.

These disruptions included transport strikes, blockage of roads in La Paz, Ciudad de El Alto and towards the rural municipality locations, public demonstrations, etc. This was not anticipated at all since at the time the project was conceived the general situation in the country was not as complex as it became later. The constant disruptions did affect the partners' ability to travel and to move around implementing the project. On several occasions some of the activities both in La Paz and in Ciudad de El Alto had to either be postponed or were severely affected.

What was anticipated but given a low risk (Low 2) was how the need for Traditional Leaders approval of any project would affect the project (Operational Risk 1). What the Risk Assessment failed to recognise was the need to re-negotiate approval each time a new Traditional Authority is elected. This gave rise to constant postponements and in one locality, Coroico, it resulted on having to be replaced by another locality, Viacha. When first approached the Coroico Traditional Authorities were very responsive and enthusiastic and welcomed the inclusion of their community in the project. Later on the new Authorities did not reject the project but simply ignored it. This meant that another group had to be approached and in selecting the municipality of Viacha, CECOPI took into consideration that when the project was first announced and publicised, the Traditional Authorities themselves had indicated their willingness to be part of the project.

Project completion date misunderstanding

Adjustments were made in the final months of the project due to WACC's misunderstanding about the completion date that had its origin in the actual date of CIDA approval for the project. The contribution agreement signed by CIDA in July 2011 was drawn up with a retroactive starting date of 1 April 2011. WACC and its Bolivian partners assumed that the project would take place over the two years starting when the agreement was signed, rather than over two years starting three months before the agreement was signed. All work plans, implementation schedules, and financial reports were submitted to CIDA with that assumption clearly indicated. WACC mistakenly believed that the absence of comment from CIDA officers on the starting and ending dates in the work plans and financial reports meant that CIDA accepted the notion that it was a two year project starting when the contribution agreement was signed.

WACC's mistake in not seeking a formal amendment to the contribution agreement came to our attention when the fifth and final officer assigned to the relationship indicated that final reports were due on the date stated in the contribution agreement.

We are grateful that after discussions WACC and its partners were given until 31 May 2013 (the reporting date in the contribution agreement) to complete the project while simultaneously preparing the final reports. The public engagement activities and some knowledge sharing activities had to be dropped to concentrate on finalising essential activities in Bolivia while simultaneously preparing reports.

Cross-cutting Themes and Priorities

Implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy:

Gender issues and analysis at the outset of the project

Lack of knowledge among women of their rights and entitlement presents a serious obstacle to achieving equality. Unless women, indigenous and disabled women in particular, are aware of their rights, they will remain in a disadvantaged position vis à vis men. For example, legislation on land ownership, an issue closely related to employment and housing as well as health, is highly favourable to women but lack of awareness makes it difficult to enforce these laws and ensure that women are able to obtain--and maintain--control of the land they farm. High levels of illiteracy among indigenous women as well as the patriarchal model to which many Andean indigenous cultures adhere, make progress very difficult and calls for increased awareness in order to transform political and social structures and full implementation of rights. Health is an area where expectations and potential are high. Historically Bolivia's Health Service has not responded to the needs of the majority of Bolivians and has reproduced the inequalities of the country's economic structure. Until recently 77% of the population was excluded from health services, particularly in the Altiplano and rural valleys, 7.5% of children died before reaching 5 years of age mainly due to preventable infectious diseases and 26.5% of those who survived suffer chronic malnutrition. Birth rates are a key component of demographics and one of the indicators of poverty among women, since there is a positive correlation between higher levels of poverty and higher number of children per woman. In 2007 Bolivia recorded the second highest birth rates in the Americas with rural women having much higher pregnancy rates than urban women. According to Bolivia's National Women's Development Plan in 2008 the country continues to have the highest maternal mortality rate in Latin America (p.74). In 2000 (Census 2001) 70% of the women who died as result of pregnancy had 6 years of schooling or less and women in rural areas have 4 times more probability of dying from pregnancy, birth or post birth related complication than those living in urban setting and 44% of babies born to mothers with low levels of education were malnourished.

In the process of creating a Central Health System based on the principle of universality of health, the Ministry of Health and Sports (MSD) in 2009 held a number of consultations with women to ensure that the proposed plans responded to the needs of

women. In these, as well as in the first national workshop on “Gender as a Social Definer of Health” participants looked at the advances and limitations of the actions and plans of the MDS and the Health Sector Plan aimed at gender equality. Working under the auspices of Bolivia’s Ministry for Equal Opportunities, the events resulted in recommendations of strategies for the strengthening and mainstreaming of gender in all sector plans. Among the major obstacles identified were lack of knowledge and the need for communication strategies to ensure that marginalised and discriminated sectors of the population are aware of their full rights and entitlements in education, health, housing and employment.

In education, there is a notorious difference between boys and girls for access to education and training, in particular in the rural areas where schools are far from the villages and children have to walk significant distances. Due to perceived dangers in this commute, usually only boys continue studying; the highest rates of illiteracy, drop-out rates and low levels of schooling are to be found in the rural areas, among the poorest and particularly among girls and women. In housing, the low percentage of state budgetary allocation for accessible housing and lack of publicly funded housing means that access to decent housing by the poorest sectors is extremely limited. Again, women are particularly affected since a high percentage are heads of households, while access to employment and work conditions are usually unfavourable to women who, in addition to working, have to undertake the care of their families.

Women with disabilities face even larger challenges since their disability adds another layer of marginalisation. Disabled women have higher rates of illiteracy (58%) and present a higher percentage of mental illness (2001 Census). Bolivia’s 2007 National Plan for Equality of Opportunity brought disability to the public sphere and is finally part of the public agenda to be addressed by the different ministries and local authorities. Gender equity among disabled people is one of the Plan’s guiding principles. Until recent years the needs of the disabled population in Bolivia had not been really included in the economic development processes. A paucity of data and available indicators points to a double discrimination against disabled women.

A profoundly patriarchal society, Bolivia has a Gender Development Index (GDI) of 91 from among 155 countries surveyed. The GDI takes into account life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, combined gross enrolment in education and estimated earned income. New legislation is beginning to change this. Bolivia’s National Plan for Women includes the design of a new long term strategy to overcome issues of widespread gender related inequality and discrimination. The Bolivian state is committed to effective interventions in **five development areas: a) economy, production and employment b) education; c) health; d) eradication of gender related violence; e) participation of women in all decision-making levels**). The new legislation addresses the key issues that this project addressed through communication rights: education, housing, health and employment and is an attempt to reverse the historical marginalisation and discrimination against women in the country, especially indigenous women. Communication rights are a key tool to ensure that development plans as well as

human rights and equality plans and all other efforts at redressing historical gender based discrimination are achieved.

Concern to institutionalize policies for women in Bolivia dates back to the 1970s and the establishment of a body dedicated to women's and children's issues, overseen by the country's First Lady and characterized by a welfare approach. The next step was the establishment in 1991 of the National Social Policy Council which drew up the Ten Year Plan of Action for Children and Women, which led in 1992 to the establishment of the National Agency for Minors, Women, and the Family. That body produced the National Women's Program, which signalled a radical shift from a welfare approach to a social investment and efficiency perspective, complete with government policy proposals recognizing the multiplier effect of improving conditions for women. The Ministry of Human Development was established in August 1993, with a division called the National Secretariat of Ethnical, Gender and Generational Affairs and an Assistant Secretary of Gender Affairs. From then on, the State had a structural mechanism for the advancement of women, responsible for formulating policies for women.

The Executive Branch was restructured in 1997-2002, giving rise to the Vice-Ministry of Gender, Generational and Family Affairs and the Directorate of Gender Affairs, within the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Planning.

The policies pursued were largely geared to social issues, but they also included poverty reduction and, conceptually, were closely tied in with the empowerment of women and the democratization of the reproductive sphere. From 2002 to 2007, gender policy-making was entrusted to state entities known for their work on behalf of vulnerable groups, a category that included women. Nowadays gender issues are the responsibility of the Vice-Ministry of Gender and Generational Matters. The Vice-Ministry is dependent from the Ministry of Justice.

Planned gender equality strategy

While the concern for gender equality has led to Bolivia developing concrete strategies and women have been greatly empowered, Bolivia is still a profoundly patriarchal society where old patterns have been maintained and still inform cultural practices. In promoting communication rights it is vital to ensure the participation of women. Given that in general more men than women in Bolivia have access to education and training, the project intended to use specific strategies to involve women at all stages

Aymara Component

Gender is a key element in all of CECOPI's work and the relationship between the Right to Communication and Information and gender equality is for CECOPI a given. CECOPI's commitment to gender equality has by now been widely acknowledged by public opinion in Ciudad de El Alto and surrounding areas. This has resulted in women and Indigenous women having shown high levels of interests in each of the activities proposed by CECOPI.

While recognising that gender equality is something that should include also the male, the group recognises the importance of generating spaces aimed at motivating more the women, and in particular Indigenous women since in mixed activities these women tend to become silent.

In their gender analysis, CECOPI indicates that cultural values among Indigenous Aymara still justify as well as disguise explicit and/or subtle mechanisms of social exclusion. One such example is the principle of *chacha-warmi* (male/female) which at the level of discourse is the most explicit example of gender equality in the Aymara world. Everything in the Aymara physical world, from mountains to stars to rivers has a feminine and a masculine aspect and the whole of the Andean social order is imbued with gendered references.

However in order to truly evaluate the Andean social order it is necessary to acknowledge that this social order is crisscrossed by strong elements inherited from the colonial order which has its own particular way of establishing hierarchies within society. Therefore nowadays the *chacha-warmi* relation results in placing women as the legitimizing element of the male voice and decision-making.

CECOPI has argued that there is no socially agreed criterion that places real equality at the centre of the male-female relation but what exists in Bolivia is a structure of marginalization that hides female exclusion. This exclusion is thus made all the more difficult to face and to challenge since it appears to be based in cultural values.

CECOPI's gender strategy was to ensure that the project allowed reflection and that both female and male beneficiaries looked at the gendered aspects of communication and media and at the gendered understanding of access to education, health, housing and employment.

Activities

In its implementation of the project CECOPI aimed at empowering participants to identify and uncover the marginalization and exclusion of Indigenous Aymara women.

The gender strategy of CECOPI was to ensure that the project allowed this reflection and that both female and male beneficiaries looked at the gendered aspects of communication and media and the gendered understanding of access to and regulation of education, health, housing and employment.

Aware that Indigenous women generally tend to become silent when participating in meeting with men, CECOPI organised single gender activities as well as mixed. This is what CECOPI called 'private' and mixed scenarios. The information materials were designed in such a way that they would also be of particular interest to Aymara women. A quota of 40% was established in order to prioritise and ensure the participation of women as trainees. The quota was met and exceeded throughout the activities.

The training was publicised in places where women are traditionally present, e.g. marketplaces. With the Aymara sector it was important to gain the support of the traditional leaders who were asked to pass on the information to the women in their communities. Radio Atipiri, which has a high level of credibility for working with Aymara women, broadcast the information given to the traditional leaders to make sure it did reach Aymara women.

Outputs:

A Basic Media Monitoring Manual

As indicated in the Logic Model one of the expected outputs was the production of a media monitoring manual (200). CECOPI has included the gender perspective in all of its work and therefore the monitoring tool has also included a gender perspective. The group decided that it was important to incorporate the issue of gender in the monitoring tool so as to ensure that when monitoring takes place the issue of gender is not subsumed in the general tool. As part of their gender strategy, CECOPI saw this as reinforcing what males and females the training that the beneficiaries had received.

Lessons learned

The organisation of single gender as well as mixed gender activities confirmed that Indigenous women felt empowered by their 'private' space and were better able to participate in mixed groups.

One important lesson learned was that even in those 'private' spaces the women's reflections included the roles of the males and the social roles of masculinity with which Indigenous males have had to live. This inclusion resulted in a much richer and wide discussion among the Indigenous women which in turn nurtured a more profound and constructive discussion within the mixed groups, in particular when learning about rights and entitlements, laws and other norms.

Appraisal of best practices

CECOPI's approach of having single gender activities which empowered Indigenous women who then went on to participate more actively in mixed gender activities has proven to be one of the best practices. CECOPI believes that without those 'preparatory' activities, the level of participation of the women would not have been the same and the possibility of jointly exploring the imposition of social roles which give rise to unequal relationships of power would not have arisen.

CECOPI has also indicated that they feel the practice of consulting with the women about the best times to hold meetings and training sessions was a good practice that ensured they could participate.

Finally CECOPI also identifies as a good practice the encouragement of women as presenters of topics for discussion. Before they accepted the role, CECOPI engaged with the women in a process of questions, clarification of their doubts, etc. This proved an effective mechanism which ensured that the content of the workshops and sessions were adequate to their existing knowledge.

Challenges encountered in implementing the strategy

Indigenous Aymara women's fear of speaking up, in the presence of males was identified as one of the challenges in the implementation of the strategy.

The other was the fact that a large majority of Indigenous Aymara women still have to request the permission of the males in the family to participate in the community.

Disability component

With the disability component the issue of gender and the development of a gender strategy proved unsatisfactory since, beyond simply recording the numbers of women and men that participated in the project, the group was unable to develop a clear gender policy.

While discussing the proposal, and taking into account that the majority of the leadership in this area rests with men, WACC and its partner discussed with the director of Bolivia's Institute for the Blind and two other leaders the need to ensure participation of disabled women in the project.

As part of the gender strategy the timing of the training was to be set to ensure that women with disabilities were able to participate as well as continue with their multiple roles and responsibilities. The training curriculum was to have sections looking at gender and leadership role of disabled women and obstacles faced to assume leadership roles in their respective communities. The work in which participants examine the role played by media and how media influence power structures was to include exploration of how patriarchal images and representations are reproduced in and through the media.

Challenges encountered in implementing the strategy

While the numbers reflected a genuine commitment to the participation of a high percentage of women, the understanding and awareness of gender itself and what it means to have a gender policy were missing. Gender is one aspect that needs to be thought about and discussed in depth with groups and people working with disability groups in Bolivia.

Cross cutting themes: Environment

The project design did not envision any notable direct impact on the environment.

However environmental issues, such as access to safe drinking water and sanitation among indigenous and marginalised sectors are pressing issues in Bolivia. The project may well have a longer term positive effect on environmental sustainability simply because the beneficiaries have learned how to ask questions and, more importantly still, have learned that they are entitled to have answers from the authorities.

Adjustments Implemented

Due to difficulties described in more detail under risk assessment related to the renewal of the support of newly elected traditional Aymara community authorities, it became necessary to change one of the municipal locations of the Aymara component of the project from Coroico to Viacha.

Public engagement activities and some knowledge sharing activities had to be dropped for reasons explained in the management section related to a misunderstanding on WACC's part about the project completion date.

RESULTS ACHIEVED AND PERFORMANCE

Highlights of Results Achieved:

Statement of Expected Results

Innovative usage of Right to Communication and Information (RTCI) in monitoring local government accountability and citizens' engagement relating to education, health, housing and employment services; increased access to education, health, housing and employment services that responds to the different priorities and interests of women/men, boys/girls in Aymara and disabled communities.

Key achievements

People with disabilities component:

The beneficiaries have gained an understanding of themselves as subjects with legal rights. The beneficiaries have made the connection between their condition as subjects with legal rights and the right to communication and information as a form of exercising their condition of subjects with legal rights. This new understanding has shown in the way the beneficiaries during public events and interventions have been able to explain to other people with disabilities and the public in general the rights contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities approved in 2006 and in the Bolivian laws dealing with the rights of people with disabilities.

The issue of disability and the right to communication and information (RTCI) of people with disability have been put on the public agenda as shown by increased coverage of issues of disabilities in the written as well as audiovisual media and the fact that disability organizations and organizations advocating for the rights of people with disabilities have begun to take an interest and speak of the RTCI. The concept has now been incorporated into their area of interest and work and they have begun to incorporate it when they articulate their needs both within their own organisations and when they relate to the media. Disabled people's organisations have improved the type and quality of information institutionally and inter-institutionally. Organisations of disabled people have received training in the ways mass media covers disability issues and the way they should cover them.

With regard to the mass media, two channels 15 and 18 have incorporated Bolivian sign language into their news. In addition it has been observed that in the media, and in particular in the print media, the use of terms such as disabled or different capabilities has given way to the use of people with disabilities which is the term that Bolivian people with disabilities organisation have chosen to describe themselves with.

While the above cannot be claimed to be solely the result of the project, but also a number of factors, including very public protests organised by groups of people with disabilities in La Paz as well as new legislation regarding disability, the work undertaken as a result of this project has consolidated and increased the small, isolated gains that had been achieved with smaller projects.

Indigenous Aymara component:

The right to communicate in Bolivia cannot be contemplated without taking into consideration a specific historical context: the colonial collective silencing of the indigenous majority of the population. The following specific characteristics have to be taken into account:

- The necessity of understanding the right to communicate as the possibility to speak, which implies working with the conditions that make possible being able to speak. This implies an examination of the social order imposed in colonial times when the territory that is now Bolivia belonged to Spain. That social order established patterns of exclusion in which large sections of the population were absent from the ongoing social dialogue.
- The collective silencing implies the symbolic presence of a single culture as the only one that is manifested and expressed in the public sphere. In other words, a mono-cultural presence governs who can express himself or herself, and who can have a public voice.
- The necessity of understanding the right to communicate as an urgent and important need to be able to express and have a voice not only as an individual, but also for the collective recovery of the voice of a people.
- Break down the vision of the right to communicate as a right pertaining only to those who are professional journalists so that it can be assumed as a right of every woman and man who has the desire and ability to speak.

In the area of training two of the most important achievements were: a) during each of the fairs those who had received the training shared their new knowledge with the people who came to the fairs showing a high degree of understanding of the issue of rights. They were able to speak confidently to the public about their rights and how rights are, and need to be enshrined in regulations and norms. In doing this they showed a high level of understanding of the topics in which they had received training. This increased knowledge was measured through observations of the participants in each of the fairs organised. There, participants were able to speak directly to the public who attended the fair, about the topics they had learned and showing a clear handling of the new concepts acquired. Observations also showed the skills of the participants to communicate and make the share that which they had learned. Further evidence of the participants' level of understanding was a comparison between the baseline information and the arguments and ideas expressed by the participants during the fairs where they showed increased knowledge. The baseline showed almost zero knowledge of the arguments and ideas they were to share with the public later.

The second key achievement was the level of enthusiasm and understanding of what is a new concept for the Indigenous Aymara people in the Bolivian Altiplano: the right to communication and information and their understanding of it as a potential tool to promote the demand for full implementation of their rights. Evidence of this is the fact that there have been many requests from the beneficiaries themselves, as well as from other Indigenous communities, to explore in more depth this new right and all its potentialities in the attainment of rights and entitlements. As well as direct requests, there has been a marked increase in the number of calls made to the radios that have covered the fairs asking for more information as to what is the right to communicate and information.

A third key achievement for CECOPI is the fact that the pilot test of the Communication Rights Index developed jointly with the Indigenous Aymara beneficiaries has shown not only the strengths and weaknesses the Index, but it has also shown the beneficiaries the potential of this tool to measure other rights. This became apparent when a participant reflected that if one right could be measured then other rights and entitlements of Bolivia's Indigenous people could also be measured in a similar way. Analysis of the results of the pilot test allowed CECOPI to establish that it is necessary to complement the tool with a qualitative dimension since in many cases it is was not possible to understand the answers to some questions and to correlate the reasons and the results.

Statement of Results Achieved:

Two groups of marginalized peoples in Bolivia, Aymara Indigenous people and people with disabilities living in and around the city of La Paz, have gained understanding of:

- a) the right to communicate and the right to information that have enabled them to claim rights and entitlements in the fields of education, health, housing and employment services.
- b) how to monitor local government accountability,
- c) how to design media strategies that respond to the different priorities and interests of women and men in Indigenous Aymara and people with disabilities communities.

Discussion groups have been formed among people with disabilities to discuss the presence of people with disabilities in the media. These discussion groups have taken as a basis the articles in the Political Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia which deal with the right to communication and information and articles in the General Law No 223 which guarantees rights and entitlements to people with disabilities.

A group of people with disabilities have formally requested the partner SECRAD to organize a programme on communication inclusion linked to the RTCI. Organizations of people with physical disabilities have asked that a programme of workshops be organized to discuss further the RTCI issue.

The issue of disability and the right to communication and information of people with disability have been put on the public agenda as shown by increased coverage of issues of disabilities in the written as well as audiovisual media, the inclusion in 2 TV channels of Bolivian Sign Language and the way mainstream media are now beginning to cover issues of disabilities in a different manner. For example they are using more frequently the expression 'people with disabilities' rather than 'disabled' or people with 'different capabilities'. Bolivian disability rights organizations have chosen people with disabilities as manner in which they want to be described. The website 'Sobre todo personas' (People Above All) <http://www.sobretodopersonas.org/> set up as a result of this project is beginning to be seen as a reference point for issues of disability in Bolivia in terms of finding information about the rights of people with disability.

Both groups worked independently on creating components of a Communication Rights Index that can be used to measure the right to communication and information enshrined in Bolivia's 2009 Constitution which in its articles 106 and 107 expressly recognizes the right to communication and information for all Bolivians citizens.²

The Index is a model that other disadvantaged and marginalized groups might want to use. Furthermore it can be adapted to other contexts and replicated for use outside Bolivia.

² *Constitución Política del Estado*, República de Bolivia, Asamblea Constituyente, Honorable Congreso Nacional, Versión Oficial Octubre 2008, pgs 42-43.

The fact that the project had the support of the country's Defensor del Pueblo (General People's Ombudsman) as well as the Ombudsman for Ciudad de El Alto, both of which participated in several of the events, has resulted in greater awareness in those two public instances of the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities and the Aymara community in relation to the right to communication and information.

Public awareness of these issues has also been increased leading to great expectations that the situation of the two groups of beneficiaries will improve as a direct result of the project being carried out.

Analysis of Project Performance

Relevance of the project lies in its focus on people living in poverty and its consistency with the needs of its target beneficiaries (specific groupings of indigenous people and people living with disability) who face social and cultural constraints to obtaining rights and entitlements in the context of greater recognition of equality at the national level. Relevance also attaches to Bolivia's constitutional right to communicate, which ought to facilitate greater access to communication and information as a means of claiming rights and entitlements.

Appropriateness of design is found in the combination of consensus-building and awareness-building at the level of local communities and their leaders, facilitated by partners with a sustained track record of working, the series of consultations that preceded the project, and the training workshops that enabled it to advance. Participatory development theory and practice were important factors in designing and implementing the project.

Sustainability is found in the fact that the project was owned by local communities as well as in the training of community representatives who can communicate the lessons learned to others and who can take part in the ongoing process of building on the project's achievements. Both institutions involved remain committed to improving the lives of their beneficiaries.

Partnership is found in the active participation of and interaction between the two local project organizers, which worked collaboratively to achieve the project's overall objectives and within their local communities to effect specific elements of the programme. Partnership is also seen in the clear definition and understanding of roles and responsibilities and the partners clearly expressed accountability to their different constituencies.

Innovation is found in the project's sound understanding of the local context, differentiated by target beneficiaries, and in its focus on marginalized sectors of Bolivian society. A further unique aspect of the project is its emphasis on the key role that communication rights play in addressing the beneficiaries' needs and expectations.

Appropriateness of resource utilization is found in the choice of appropriate human resources (local experts), training methodologies directly related to the local context as well as appropriate means of communication including community radio, the Aymara language, and building relationships with local entities that strengthened the project's overall credibility. The project benefitted from close and adequate management of project assets, an outstanding match between expertise and personal skills, and sound financial and management procedures.

Informed and timely action. Effective monitoring and regular exchange of information enabled project managers to take timely decisions to ensure the smooth running of the project and to overcome unforeseen obstacles. The project concluded slightly earlier than anticipated, but project managers ensured that activities and reporting were carried out effectively and professionally.

Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Overall:

The project should have been longer and should have spanned at least 2.5 to 3 years rather than the two years in which it was implemented.

Indigenous Component:

Lessons Learnt

Need to prioritize to working in alliance with other groups and networks. Furthermore, it is necessary for the groups to have awareness of the need to form alliances and work with them.

It is important to assign appropriate time to training processes since short training processes are not the best. In particular when the training implies working with new concepts and ideas.

The gender equality strategy must include males. The dominant social order has, in practice, created a male stereotype which informs and conditions the male presence.

It is also important to include the colonial past to fully understand Bolivia's current social order and the levels of exclusion and marginalization it presents. This was not originally part of a cross-cutting strategy but by the end of the project it had become a clear part of it.

Recommendations

It is highly important and urgent to begin a longer process of reflection on the right to communication and information which is included in the Bolivian Constitution. The way in which this right is portrayed in this document reveals a trade unions and journalists' approach. In this context it creates difficulties since it seems to represent the right of journalists and media professionals rather than the possibility of self-expression for all

sectors of society. This is point that needs further and longer term discussion than was possible in this project.

It is important to think about and highlight the issue of equality as a process of leveling. During the project it was noted that in State norms and regulations and even in the Constitution itself, equality before the law is assumed as a given. The project partners believe that this is not enough since in reality inequalities continue to pervade the social order. Efforts need to be made to develop processes that contribute, concretely to achieving equality. It is not sufficient for the Constitution to acknowledge the right to communication and information but rather it is important to begin processes which will ensure that the right will be a reality.

Finally, it is recommended that in order to make this project's outcomes sustainable and the processes it has started, it is necessary to maintain networks and alliances and to build on the experiences and work achieved.

People with disabilities component:

Lessons Learnt:

The topic of the project is an innovative one and though at the beginning the RTCI was a new concept for organizations of people with disabilities, it became an important topic which the beneficiaries wish to continue to explore.

The conceptual and instrumental part of the project need to be developed at the same time with a single focus.

It is important to learn about specific treatment, ways of working, language and habits when working with people with disabilities.

The need to develop the criteria expressed by the representatives of the four different disabilities (intellectual, physical, visual and auditory) in order to produce balanced information.

Recommendations:

It is important to ensure that the dispositions of the new legislation (Law N.223) are widely known by the people with disabilities. This information should be made available in Braille, sign language, etc) in order for this sector of the population to be fully informed and to have access to the right information.

The group involved in the project is equipped to contribute to advocate for the RTCI in relation to disability issues.

The information and knowledge developed as a result of this project should lead to the formulation of future actions and follow up in pursue of more just and fair conditions of life for Bolivia's people with disabilities.