

News from Bolivia Programs April, 2007

1. The enlargement of the Senkata (El Alto) clinic, with funds from the Spanish non-profit funding agency ANESVAD, will be completed in May. By September, we expect to start providing 24 hour service focusing primarily on neonatal, child and maternal health, including emergency and inpatient care.
2. Every six months, neighborhood authorities from within our el El Alto service area meet to evaluate area health activities and to propose, plan and participate in joint solutions for local public health problems. In recent meetings they drew up a plan to work with municipal government authorities to extend rabies vaccination coverage and control the local canine population.
3. Home visits continue in a pilot area of El Alto among 15 of the more than 65 neighborhoods in our El Alto service area, which is highly residential. In most of the families, both parents are gone during the day working in informal (meaning no social security benefits) occupations in the El Alto economy. These jobs include street-side food and drink vendors, candy and cigarette sellers, corner cell phone operators, minibus and taxi drivers, mechanics, wood workers, etc., etc. As result of the absence of the parents, our home visit communication strategies now include focusing time and materials towards older siblings that are in charge of small children. We have found that many of these adolescents and youth are good replicators of health messages within their families.
4. CSRA, for the last dozen years, has been a pioneer in working closely with Municipal Government Local Health Boards. The Local Health Board in our El Alto service area recently approved the use of \$us 65,000 worth of municipal government funding to further the construction and equipping of the enlargement of the Senkata Clinic.
5. The Red Cross clinic that we manage in Montero was among seven clinics nationwide that completed a two year process to be the first facilities in Bolivia to receive international accreditation in the "provision of quality health services with a focus on gender." This accreditation is sponsored by the Population Council, USAID and PROCOSI, a national network of non-profits working in public health. Two of our Montero staff members, Fémida Gutierrez and Silvia Ajuacho, were among six professionals to be the first to receive recognition as official evaluators for other clinics seeking accreditation.
6. This past rainy season (December, 2006 through March, 2007, Bolivia suffered the worst wide-spread flooding in recent history, particularly in the tropical Eastern lowlands. Our Montero staff participated actively in local emergency efforts. In addition, in coordination with the Bolivia USAID mission, CSRA provided ten thousand 250 ml containers of chlorine solution (produced in our Villa Cochabamba Clinic water laboratories) for water purification in emergency operations in the hard-hit Beni Department.