

ANNEX 4

CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS: MIZQUE

IRRIGATION PROJECT IN CHUCHONGANI, EXECUTED BY CEDEAGRO

Formation of Program

The relationship between the CEDEAGRO (Agricultural Development Center) institution and the Chuchongani community began in the early 1980s, when valley producers, prohibited from organizing as a sindicato and faced with the high cost of chemical fertilizers, joined together in an association of potato producers.

With the help of volunteer technical experts, who would subsequently set up the CEDEAGRO, the Potato Producers Association successfully negotiated to import fertilizers directly.

This positive experience encouraged many directors to turn to the volunteer experts when, later on, the region suffered serious difficulties because of the drought that had begun in 1982. Many communities asked for construction of irrigation canals; CEDEAGRO functionaries responded to five of them, including Chuchongani.

It should be noted that the experience of the Potato Producers Association would determine the direction taken by CEDEAGRO's subsequent actions. In the first place, it did away with the preconception that impoverished campesinos were incapable of saving; in the second place, it meant that intervention no longer presumed that only institutions and professionals had the knowledge and skills to solve problems. This direction was fundamental because it started a mutually beneficial process in which the community and institution learned from each other and which led to campesino initiative and an increasingly subordinate role for the NGO.

Construction of irrigation canals was initiated with the financial support of OXFAM-America, OXFAM-Canada, and the Bolivian Association of Belgium.

Program Objectives and Methodology

The project's objective was to construct the irrigation infrastructure needed for agricultural production. Later, with construction completed, new challenges were to emerge.

In 1984, starting out with an investment of about 12,000 USD, reconstruction of an irrigation canal was undertaken in Chuchongani. It was, in fact, a reconstruction because the Cochabamba Development Corporation had already financed and executed installations for the community that never functioned due to the fact that the irrigation ditch was badly located.

Reconstruction work ended in six months, with its objectives apparently accomplished. After installation of the infrastructure, however, the problems began; community members had no experience in water use.

Therefore, what seemed to be the end of the project was actually the start of a long relationship between CEDEAGRO, by now institutionalized, and the Chuchongani community. Once the irrigation canal had been built, institutional perspective changed and the two parties involved realized that they had to go on to agricultural planning, in combination with appropriate water use and a strong organizational framework.

This was to require a long period of collective experimentation and research, in order to justify what families would have to spend on irrigation. Community leaders collaborated by trying out changes in the times for planting, irrigating, and harvesting.

Results and Impact

After a year of observation and experimentation, the results were consulted with water-use magistrates who worked out an agreement with the community on amount of water flow, number of participants, and cost of water, as well as changes in harvest times for potato and other vegetable crops.

In this way, the participating ninety families, together with three magistrates to regulate water use, one in each sector of the community, established a far-reaching experience in self-management: standards were set for the use of water resources to irrigate 200 hectares of arable land; a savings process was started based on a revolving fund financed by a 4,000 USD subsidy; and this achievement in resolving irrigation needs was a decisive factor in encouraging not only further demands, but also self-management initiatives for local development.

Present Situation of the Project

As we have just stated, the success of the project rested as much on its multiplier effect as on the fact that it was duly executed. In this sense, it can be said that the project was the starting point for other initiatives, at first shared between institution and community, and later with more community leadership and less institutional participation.

The success of the irrigation-project results convinced the Chuchongani community of the benefits of collective action. They have now set up cooperative mechanisms for obtaining agricultural input, although production and marketing continue to be family managed. Collective needs for basic services have been nearly met: the community has home installation of potable

water and is in the process of acquiring electricity, for which it has saved 20,000 USD in counterpart funds.

And, finally, the project has cut back on seasonal migration.

Why the Project Succeeded

1. The initiative came from the community.
2. The target population actively participated in planning and shared in defining the most important aspects of using the project's benefits: course of canal; number of hours, schedule, and amount of water flow; administration and cost of water; management of water basin; and formation of leaders.
3. Mechanisms for proper water use were defined by the community itself after a long period of joint observation and experimentation by the executing institution and the target population.
4. In its execution of the project, the institution was sufficiently flexible to make possible agreement on how to respond to the problems that arose after installation of irrigation infrastructure.
5. Encouraged by this collective achievement, the community undertook other local development projects such as basic services and silo construction.
6. Financing agencies made a positive contribution with technical recommendations--for example, to associate irrigation with water-basin management and reforestation as a way of conserving water resources.
7. From the outset, the executing institution and the community established clear-cut rules on the rights and obligations of both parties.

PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, EXECUTED BY THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MIZQUE

The Provincial Development Council is a project that is being executed under the auspices of the municipality, with the technical support of CEDEAGRO and with financing by the Belgium agency SOS FAIM. It is an extremely interesting experience in setting up an entity that represents the various interests of the provincial, although mainly municipal, population and that is capable of defining and coordinating development strategy policies.

Formation of the Program

From 1986 to 1989, two Mizque communities were in serious conflict over ownership of sources of irrigation water. Neither the sindicatos of the two communities, nor the Sub-Central Office, nor the Campesino Central could settle the dispute. This sparked the idea of an entity--the Provincial Development Council--that, over and above the Campesino Central, would be empowered to do so.

The head sindicato organization, the Campesino Central, could not dissuade the parties from taking legal action, with all this would imply--time and resources wasted, and the conflict prolonged indefinitely, even to the point of violence.

With these risks in mind, the Campesino Central called together all the institutions in Mizque to consider creating an association of the most representative organizations and institutions in the area.

Two factors figured in this initiative: on the one hand, the work already performed jointly by CEDEAGRO and the Campesino Central; and on the other, the absence of a municipal government capable of taking such action.

Work Performed Jointly by CEDEAGRO and the Campesino Central

CEDEAGRO has been responsible for the training of sindicato leaders and, above all, played a major role in building up the Campesino Central. Until about 1984, the sindicatos and, especially, the Campesino Central of Mizque province were still under the influence of the "military-campesino pact". This influence was concentrated in a few leaders whose claim to legitimacy depended on their ties to the Cochabamba prefecture, thanks to which they acted on behalf of the campesinos.

CEDEAGRO began its work in 1986 with a proposal that young leaders should be trained in collective workshops where discussions would be held on campesino problems and provincial development. In all likelihood, not only the formation of a new leadership but also the transition to democracy were what determined a change in the old leadership.

The new directors of the Campesino Central, in consultation with CEDEAGRO, pinpointed the most serious defects in the previous Central management: its ignorance about provincial matters; its lack of information on the needs of the region's campesino population; and its failure to establish contacts within the communities. All of this produced campesino directors whose interests were individual rather than collective.

Between 1985 and 1987, the Campesino Central began a survey of the communities that made up the province. Its objective was to gather diagnostic data on the population, existing infrastructure, and campesino demands. Every Central director visited each community on foot, carrying simple forms to be filled out on the basis of the following questions: how many are we; what do we have; what do we do; what do we want; and what is our culture.

This process was innovative and creative. For the first time, campesinos had contact in their own communities with their directors. And now aware of the magnitude of its constituency, as regards both geography and population, the Campesino Central began to realize the importance of its work.

Having verified the potentialities and limitations of the region and its impoverished campesino population, the variety of ecological zones, and the extent of cultural diversity, the

Campesino Central faced the challenge of expanding its activities, which until then had been solely political, into the area of local development.

Up to this time, CEDEAGRO was the only institution present in the region. It should be recalled that the Municipality had existed as a mere figurehead; its functions were limited to keeping the town center clean and supervising sanitary conditions in the central market.

CEDEAGRO and the Campesino Central substantially modified their vision. In light of the diagnosis data, probably the first participatory diagnosis in Bolivia, the institution and the campesino head-office now had to cope with a more complex reality, one that could not be changed by such specific projects as seed improvement and irrigation infrastructure construction that, although necessary, were not sufficient. The challenge was to undertake provincial development through local power.

In 1990, a CEDEAGRO functionary native to Mizque, backed by the Campesino Central, presented his candidacy for the office of Mayor. He ran on a development program based on the participatory diagnosis and featuring "chauvinist" slogans designed to awaken the population to its regional identity and its commitment to the municipality.

After winning the election, the new mayor had to deal with his office's lack of funds. To resolve this problem, it was decided that the mayor's office, CEDEAGRO, and the community should combine their work and resources. Thus, began a kind of incestuous relationship between NGO and municipal government that, although certainly open to criticism, offered undeniable advantages for undertaking local development.

Municipality Weaknesses

Until enactment of the Popular Participation Law, the tiny budget of rural municipalities permitted them to pay the salaries of just two functionaries: the mayor and someone responsible for keeping the town center and the central market clean.

Project Objectives

The objective of the project is to strengthen the Provincial Development Council so that it can fulfill its role of defining development policies and strategies by incorporating the demands of the most important sectors and organizations: campesino, women's center, neighborhood committee, and municipal government.

The link between the people and the mayor's office is the Development Council and it is here, not in the mayor's office, where the overall aspects of development policies are examined, including discussion and approval of the municipal development program and annual operative plan, together with consideration and evaluation of proposals by non-governmental institutions. The Development Council is the NGO's interlocutor as regards project and budgetary matters.

Project Results

The initial objective of the Development Council, as we have mentioned, was to settle disputes in cases where the Campesino Central did not have the authority to do so. This initial objective kept being modified until it became secondary to functions having to do with development policy guidelines.

From 1990 to date, the Development Council has endorsed and committed itself to all projects connected with municipal development. In this way, all sectors of the province can democratically participate in the decision-making process through their representatives.

The Council operates out of the mayor's office; the logistical problems of getting its representatives to rural communities where they can check and consult with local population have been solved thanks to SOS FAIM. This agency has made it possible for the Council to move from place to place by providing funds for the purchase of three mobile units, office equipment, communication facilities, and food stocks.

Once the financing period has ended, the mayor's office and the communities will be expected to cover the maintenance costs of the Development Council.

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS: VILLA SERRANO

NUTRITION PROJECT, EXECUTED BY CEDEC

Translator's Note: In the following section, the original Spanish refers only to "desnutrición", which is "undernourishment". From the context, it is clear that not only undernourishment but malnourishment ("malnutrición") is involved. Although the project population may not be getting enough to eat, it is not starving; in terms of nutrition, however, its diet is clearly inadequate.

Formation of Program

The 1989 survey conducted by CEDEC (Study Center on Chuquisaca Development) in the Belisario Boeto province, revealed that the population's inadequate diet had resulted in widespread mal/under-nourishment, including stunted growth and mental retardation. The survey information made clear the need for programs designed to alleviate and combat infant mal/under-nourishment.

The project that was undertaken initially proposed a change in diet. After three years, however, it was decided that there were too many problems involved in trying to change dietary habits. In the first place, the mistake was made of insisting on consumption of chicken and eggs--products that traditionally were marketed. In the second place, solar tents were built that, although encouraging vegetable consumption, unduly burdened women with additional work; moreover, the difficulties of obtaining agrofilm meant that there was a tendency to abandon solar tents once the nylon cover had to be replaced.

In its second stage, the objectives of the project were shifted from changing dietary habits to ensuring proper nutrition.

Project Objectives

The fundamental objective of the next stage of the project was to ensure proper nutrition in a comprehensive way by creating alternatives to donated food and by raising the yield of market-oriented crops, thereby increasing income and improving the quality of alternative consumption.

Within this adjusted project, income generation was essential because only with increased income could campesino families purchase nutritional products other than what they produced in their parcel and, in addition, have resources for solar-tent maintenance.

The four hundred families involved in the project live in the communities of Cañadillas, Socabón, Lampasillos, Sipotendi, Santa Rosa, Piedra Grande, Lampazos, Villa Serrano, Huerta Mayo, Huaca Huasi, Ovejeros, Pampas Arias, Blanca Flor, and Mendoza.

Work has been carried out basically at the family level. Institution and population are connected through the sindicato, which is the entity that promotes, mobilizes, and evaluates the project within the community. It also suggests suitable families to take part in project activities.

Not all families in a community can participate in this project--only those that have water and land--which means leaving out the poorest families. On the assumption that production is more a family than a community matter, the institution also opted for a type of family production.

Project Results

CEDEC and the participating communities constructed an important network of infrastructure for family production: silos, solar tents, henhouses, and open-air vegetable gardens. All of these were combined with training in nutrition and hygiene and with raising female self-esteem. In this way, food production has been promoted both for family consumption and for the market; crops have been diversified with the introduction of new vegetables and Andean varieties such as the quinoa, broad bean, and tarwi; and women have learned new skills.

In terms of infrastructure and services, the project has contributed the following:

- family solar tents
- vegetable plots, with gardening tools
- henhouses, with 40 under construction
- poultry distributed
- silos constructed
- families whose daily diet is being monitored
- children, 14 years and younger, whose physical measurements are under continuous supervision.

Project results can be considered from two standpoints-- changes in nutrition indices, and community initiatives in resource use.

The program succeeded in reducing mal/under-nourishment from severe to moderate, a result confirmed by the ongoing measurement of children's physical development.

Furthermore, project results have brought about a change in eating habits thanks to increased production and consumption of fruit and vegetables containing vitamins, proteins and calories.

Encouragement of poultry raising has led to consumption of more animal protein and also brought in additional income.

Construction of production infrastructure like family silos has reduced post-harvest losses by 10 to 40 percent.

It is predicted that this project, which is directly addressed to families, will not only be viable but will continue to benefit the families involved. It is also expected that families will acquire the habit of eating vegetables and fruit so that, on the one hand, they will diversify their output and, on the other, will produce a surplus of vegetables and fruit that will provide them with more income and enable them to replace greenhouse material as needed.

SEED POTATO PRODUCTION PROJECT, EXECUTED BY CEDEC

Formation of Program

Given the fact that Villa Serrano communities enjoyed the advantage of nematode-free soil, CEDEC (Center for Chuquisaca Studies and Development), in conjunction with the Campesino Central Office and a few sindicatos, began planning a project for improved seed potato that could become an important source of income and also supply improved seed to the regional market.

Project Objectives

An interesting project was proposed for increasing the added value of potato output, to be financed by PROCADE (Alternative Program for Campesino Development) and self-managed by PROPASE (Association of Seed Potato Producers).

Although the project began with endorsement by the Campesino Central Office and agrarian sindicatos, it was directly aimed at individual campesinos, who later became part of an Association of Producers.

Producers participating in the project were carefully selected by the sindicato directorship on the basis of their land being pest-free, which was then confirmed by laboratory analysis.

Since the start of the project six years ago, there have been a number of adjustments to meet new challenges. One of the major adjustments was to include women in the training program. Initially, no account was taken of women's role in production and their skills in managing and selecting seed. Unfortunately, the production aspects of women's work have still not been translated into political empowerment, nor have women been made an integral part of PROPASE.

Project Results

In six years, the project has been extended to cover an ever larger population and its results can be positively measured by the substantial increase in the annual income of campesino men and women beneficiaries. Furthermore, infrastructure has been constructed that has reduced loss of stored seed potato. Nevertheless, the project's self-management objective has not yet been fully realized.

Work was carried out in eight communities--Mendoza, Cañadillas, Blanca Flor, Socavón, Kewiñas, Santa Rosa, Sipotendi, and Lampasillos--with an average of 58 beneficiary families, although this number has varied from year to year according to campesino interest; for example, from 1996 to 1997 there were 24 families; from 1997 to 1998 there were 54; and currently there are 78 families participating.

The growing number of those interested in joining the project is due its favorable effect on income, which went up 600 to 1,000 USD a year. Given that, at the national level, average annual campesino income is 200 USD, this implies a substantial positive impact.

As regards production infrastructure, four central silos have been built, each with a capacity of 1,000 qq, and 24 family silos. Thanks to better storage facilities, there has been an enormous increase in the tuber's sprout-producing capacity.

For all that, PROPASE is still not sufficiently organized to take over its own management in marketing, administrative decisions, silo supervision, and input supply; these responsibilities are handled by CEDEC.

The only function transferred to PROPASE so far has been seed selection. The challenge now faced by CEDEC and PROPASE is to consolidate transfer of project management by 1998. As for the member families of PROPASE, they have conscientiously managed production methods and seed selection in their land parcels.

Factors contributing to the project's success were the following:

- Active participation of the community in response to rapidly confirmed positive results
- Endorsement by the sindicato
- Use of simple technology
- Good soil conditions
- Immediate improvement in family income
- Market access opportunities
- Ongoing contact between institution and population, and dissemination of information, especially about income generation

An important element was the learning process that took place during the project's execution. At the outset, neither the institution nor the Producers Association had any experience in marketing and, furthermore, no clearly defined bases existed for cost calculation.

Because of lack of experience in data collection and marketing, there were errors in cost calculation, meaning not only that the Association suffered financial losses and required higher institutional subsidies, but that producers lost confidence in the mechanism of individual payment.

Weaknesses of the Project

The Producers Association is still a dependent and fragile organization. Marketing control and silo supervision are responsibilities that have not yet been transferred. It should also be mentioned that because the Producers Association has had no experience in obtaining commercial credit, CEDEC has been performing this service on a small scale and has provided input.

Since its members change at the start of every agricultural year, there is a lot of movement within the Association. The benefits gained by member families during a production cycle attract the interest of others and have resulted in a steady increase in membership. On the one hand, this favors the Association because it means that production of seed potato keeps up with growing demand; on the other, it has prevented the emergence of a stable directorship capable of taking over administrative and commercial responsibilities.