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**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation (SDC) in Bolivia**



In this booklet in Spanish, retrievable via the QR or the weblink below – the booklet was part of the printed version in Spanish – you will find summarized information on the projects executed or supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia in the past years. The links found in the booklet provide information and characteristics related to each of the projects, as well as knowledge management products, including lessons learnt, experiences, best practices, tools, and resources (all in Spanish).

54 YEARS

*Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation (SDC)
with Bolivia*

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Credits

Title

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Diagrammed in Bolivia

Marcas Asociadas S.R.L.

2024

Foreword

The path sown

Motivated towards contributing to Bolivia's development, Daniel Blanc and Philippe Chollet rose to the call of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), becoming the first Swiss experts to arrive in the country, at the end of 1969. Besides their technical knowledge in the agricultural and livestock breeding field, they brought with them cattle of the Swiss Simmental and Brown Swiss breeds, together with agricultural instruments and a variety of seeds. Thus emerged a fraternal relationship that initiated Switzerland's strategic partnership for Bolivian development, that has lasted 54 years.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)'s trajectory in Bolivia over these years flourished and persisted in a complex political, social and economic context, initially amidst successive undemocratic regimes separated by brief constitutional periods, interrupting the hard work being done, such as in the Bolivian farming sector in the 1970s.

The final years of the 1970s and the first years of the 1980s were particularly hard years politically,

forcing the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to temporarily suspend its aid programme, which returned in 1982 with the democratic opening up and a broader approach.

Renewed from the end of the 1980s onward, with the aim of contributing towards development from an innovative and transformative perspective, the then called Swiss Technical Cooperation (COTESU) opted for a highly comprehensive approach, complementing the technical work it had been doing. Through new programmes and projects, it fostered the creation of new multi-actor platforms in which different players worked collectively and cooperatively at the national, department and local-municipal levels.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation prompted dialogue between the State, civil society, smallholder farmers and indigenous grassroots organizations, youth, women, and beneficiaries in general, with the aim of attending to problems common to all actors, beyond their differences. This participative work



constituted an added value which allowed the participants to be key players of development in a vision of co-responsibility.

In the 1990s, empowerment was an important strategy in the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation work, aiming to support poverty reduction and inequality. In particular, the indigenous-smallholder villages, youth and women who were in situations of vulnerability had the possibility of becoming empowered from a multidimensional perspective; that is, not only in terms of access to and exercise of their social, political and cultural rights, but also in terms

of access to economic resources and basic services.

The experiences accumulated on the topic of empowerment left a significant mark in Bolivia: actors exposed to situations of vulnerated rights became strengthened with knowledge, skills, mechanisms, and tools allowing them to become empowered and enjoy better conditions for having access to dignified lives.

Beginning in the 2000 decade — with a clear and precise interpretation of the context, reflected in active and committed work — Switzerland consolidated a cooperation model that motivated the creation and design of joint actions between the Government and civil society, thus becoming the development partner that Bolivian society demanded and needed.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation adopted a rationale of action based on long-term accompaniment, resilience in the face of complex situations, sustainability

and the building of bridges between the diverse actors in Bolivia. Based on this concept, far from taking credit for the achievements, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation strengthened the protagonist role of the development actors in these processes. Switzerland recognized and valued, at all times, the participation of the actors in each of its programmes and projects.

The compilation of data and the improvement in the conditions and possibilities for training and exchange of experiences consolidated the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation contribution as a laboratory for ideas for the long range. Work was done together with universities, civil society, associations, and producers.

Knowledge management contributed towards attending to a diversity of issues, which in turn generated new fields of action, among which stand out those of seeds, forage, watershed management, territorial management and adaptation to climate change, among others.

Similarly, SDC contributed towards the development of microfinance and rural financial services, decentralization, culture, technical professional training, access to justice, and reducing violence against women.

Over these 54 years of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation work, contributions were made in different spheres, for citizens to have a better chance of exercising their rights and to gradually narrow the gaps in inequality and poverty.

We hope that these contributions and inputs last in time and continue strengthening the efforts of the Bolivian State and of the diversity of actors that work in the country, for progressing towards sustainable and inclusive development.

Dr. Edita Vokral

Swiss Ambassador in Bolivia

Introduction

An effort to summarize legacies

Summarizing Switzerland's contributions in development — which is ending its bilateral cooperation with Bolivia in 2024 — is not an easy task.

Both large projects and small actions have helped bring about concrete results for progress of the country and the development of a variety of public programmes and policies that persist in time.

This effort of identifying and recognizing the contribution of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Bolivia is done in the sphere of the Communication and Knowledge Management Plan (GCO) of the Phasing out Programme, with the aim for it to serve as reference and inspiration for future development actions performed in the country.

With methodological ends, the legacies are grouped together in four fields:

1. Economic development
2. Environment and natural resources management
3. Governability and human rights
4. Culture and development

In each of these spheres, efforts were manifold and rich in learning. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation perspective, with different approaches, was to promote sustainable development, reducing poverty and inequalities; helping to increase resilience, and strengthening the population and institutions.

Many of these contributions constitute milestones in the transformation and strengthening of efforts of the Bolivian State.

The present effort — which seeks to reflect the 54 years of cooperation for development of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation through the Embassy of Switzerland in Bolivia — aims to be an appreciation of the work of different actors and the contributions of the Cooperation's partners.

There will certainly be many topics, tasks, players, and actions that will remain unnamed because of the summary that this publication constitutes, but that were undoubtedly important for the work done in over half a century.



In the presentation of this publication, in the inside cover, there is a booklet and the web links of the projects supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) up to 2023. At the end of the publication are the QR codes for access to the digital version of this magazine, and for the booklet giving access via QR codes to the Knowledge Management Platforms of SDC's recent projects in Bolivia.

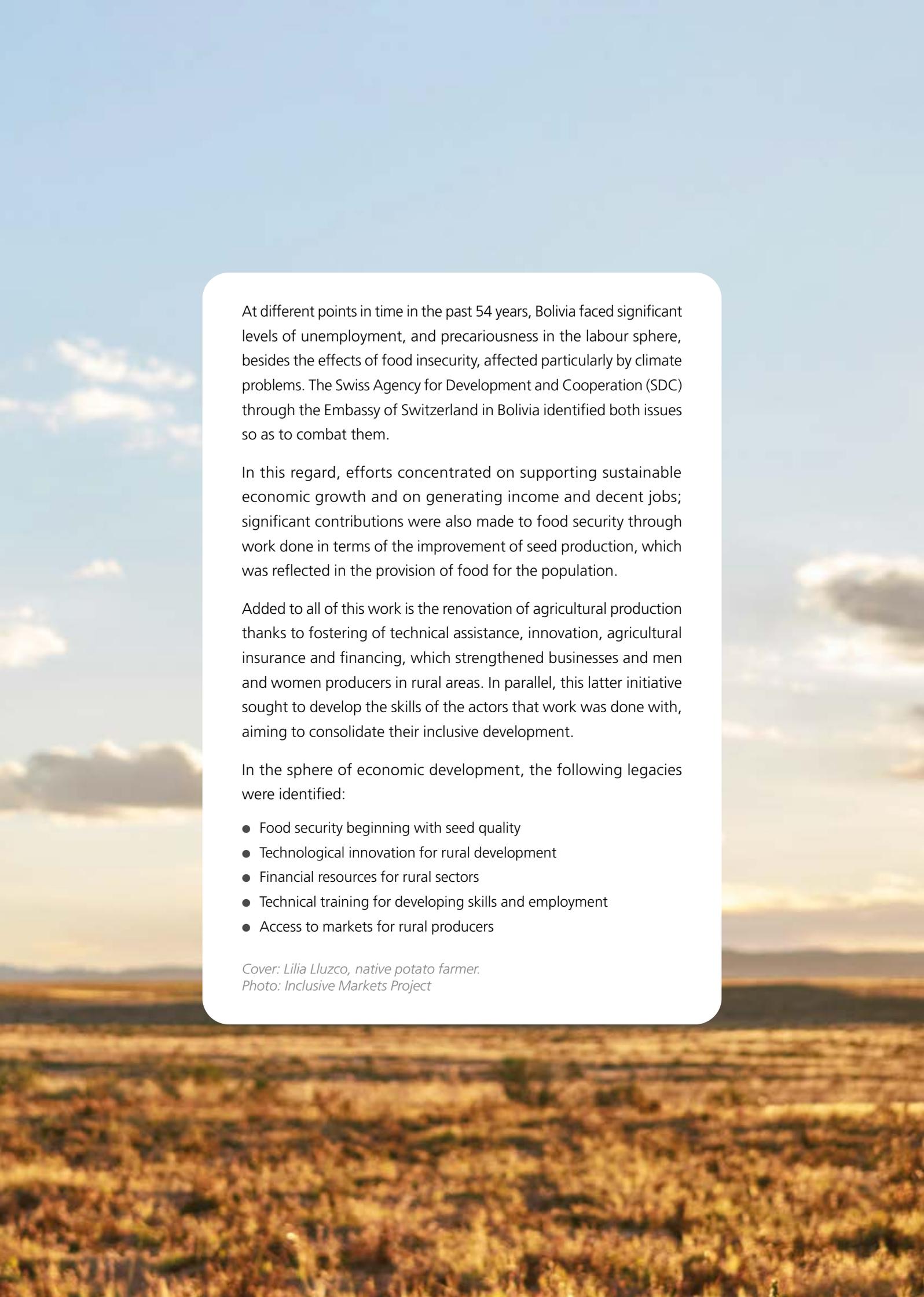
Hoping that this material will fulfil its purpose, I wish you happy reading.

Ueli Mauderli

Head of Cooperation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Bolivia

A woman wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a red knitted vest over a light blue long-sleeved shirt stands in a field. She is holding several potatoes in her hands and looking off to the side. The background shows a vast, open landscape under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The lighting suggests it is either early morning or late afternoon, with a warm glow on the scene.

Economic Development with a Comprehensive Perspective



At different points in time in the past 54 years, Bolivia faced significant levels of unemployment, and precariousness in the labour sphere, besides the effects of food insecurity, affected particularly by climate problems. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through the Embassy of Switzerland in Bolivia identified both issues so as to combat them.

In this regard, efforts concentrated on supporting sustainable economic growth and on generating income and decent jobs; significant contributions were also made to food security through work done in terms of the improvement of seed production, which was reflected in the provision of food for the population.

Added to all of this work is the renovation of agricultural production thanks to fostering of technical assistance, innovation, agricultural insurance and financing, which strengthened businesses and men and women producers in rural areas. In parallel, this latter initiative sought to develop the skills of the actors that work was done with, aiming to consolidate their inclusive development.

In the sphere of economic development, the following legacies were identified:

- Food security beginning with seed quality
- Technological innovation for rural development
- Financial resources for rural sectors
- Technical training for developing skills and employment
- Access to markets for rural producers

*Cover: Lilia Lluzco, native potato farmer.
Photo: Inclusive Markets Project*



Native potato. Photo: Economic Development Programme.

Caring for seeds, the basis of food security

Understanding that seeds are the basis of food systems is essential. Since 1969, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Bolivia prioritized knowledge and science transfer for conserving and improving seeds. This allowed the strengthening of fodder seeds for ensuring the protein food chain. In its programmes, SDC placed the main emphasis on potato seeds. All of this work was done with the revaluing of ancestral knowledge and establishing mixed enterprises; that is, through a synergy between public and private entities. With this initiative, at least ten seed production units were established. Many of the institutions and initiatives worked on during this period are ongoing in 2023.

Food security (1969-1993)

1969

The Swiss pioneers arrive in Bolivia, among them Daniel Blanc and Felipe Chollet, with 90 cows and 18 Brown Swiss studs.

1972

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) begins the bid on fodder seeds in Cochabamba, with the aim of ensuring the food needed for livestock.

Empresa Universitaria de Semillas Forrajeras (SEFO) is founded in coordination with Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS).

1982

Relations begin with the Ministry of Planning and Coordination of that time in support of projecting the country based on political-administrative decentralization starting from the local and micro-regional level.

1984

With the aim of producing potato seeds for domestic and international markets, **Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa (UPS-SEPA)** is founded. Instituto Boliviano de Tecnología Agropecuaria, Asociación de Servicios Artesanales Rurales and SDC work on this initiative.

In those years, small farmers of San Juan del Oro — a municipality located between Chuquisaca, Tarija, Potosí, and Oruro — practiced self-sufficient agriculture based on tradition: they produced alfalfa, cultivating it in rotation with vegetables. In the mid-1970s, the work of the farmers was affected by an aphid pest, the hard work of threshing with animals (process of grinding cut cereals for separating the grain from the straw) and the lack of sales of the product. On the other hand, the farmers had experience in cultivation of the crops and wanted to improve productivity. And they possessed other advantages: they had water for irrigation and land for producing the alfalfa seeds needed for covering the country's potential demand. This scenario was taken advantage of by Empresa Universitaria de Semillas Forrajeras-Sociedad Anónima Mixta (SEFO-

SAM) — the producer and seller of fodder seeds in the inter-Andean valleys of Bolivia — that entered the sector to propose improvements. The company suggested renovating ancient traditional crops, protecting seed crops against pests, freeing up the heavy work of threshing with animals, and selling the product directly at an attractive price, among other activities.

The producers were interested in the proposal, so in 1976 the joint process of alfalfa seed production began. SEFO provided technical assistance, made a tractor for ploughing available to the farmers, ensured the supply of phytosanitary products for combatting pests, and provided farm equipment at market prices.



Production of different legumes. Photo: Economic Development Programme.

1985

The Agroecological Research Centre of Universidad de Mayor de San Simón of Cochabamba (AGRUCO) was created in the framework of the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement signed between Switzerland and Bolivia in 1973.

1986

Semillas Forrajeras-Sociedad Anónima Mixta (SEFO-SAM) is consolidated. The company is made up of UMSS, small seed producers and COSUDE. It operates in Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Tarija, and Chuquisaca.

1988

The Promoción e Investigación de Productos Andinos (PROINPA) institution is created. It works in generating and disseminating technology, mainly for promoting agricultural innovation of tubers and other Andean products.

1993

The Conservación Biodiversidad de Raíces y Tubérculos Andinos (BIODIV-RTA) project emerges, in partnership with PROINPA, among other partners.



Production field of forage peanuts, cultivated and produced with seed producing smallholder farmers. Photo: SEFO-SAM project.

Forage plant seeds for livestock, a priority

Research on seeds and their preservation was one of the first actions of Swiss citizens Daniel Blanc and Philippe Chollet, who in 1969 were pioneers who arrived in Bolivia to promote cattle breeding. The two specialists began with livestock production, but in the process realized that the forage needed for feeding the cattle was insufficient in quantity and quality. They thus proposed creating a seed laboratory. The initiative, which was comprehensive technical assistance for contributing towards food security was replicated throughout the country over the years. For this initial work to have continuity, SDC partnered with Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS) of Cochabamba for doing research, and producing and selling seeds, with

the aim of organizing a broad programme of cultivation of forage species for domestic self-supply.

In 1972 Empresa Universitaria de Semillas Forrajeras (SEFO) emerged in Tiquipaya. In 1986 the SEFO-SAM company was consolidated, made up of UMSS with 50% of shares, small seed farmers with 49% and SDC with a 1% share of honorary participation which was then distributed between the partners. The company began its operations in Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Tarija, and Chuquisaca, where it established centres for collecting and storing seeds.

.....► By 2014 SEFO-SAM had sold 15,000 tons of forage seeds, which leads to estimating that **1,500,000 hectares of forage crops were planted.** ◀.....

Potatoes and food security

Since its arrival, the then-called Technical Cooperation of the Swiss Government in Bolivia (COTESU) understood that it was necessary to strengthen seed production for ensuring food security. Thus, besides promoting forage, it also fostered the production of potatoes, a tuber that is the nutritional basis of many Bolivian families.

Hence, in 1984 Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa (UPS-SEPA) was founded, in partnership with Instituto Boliviano de Tecnología Agropecuaria (IBTA), Asociación de Servicios Artesanales Rurales (ASAR) and SDC. The aim of this company was to produce potato seeds for domestic and export markets in a profitable and competitive way, with a high level of genetic quality. The production of “pre-basic” potato seeds came from the

reproduction of crops with laboratory in vitro plant tissue. Potato cultivation was done in protected environments (greenhouses) with phytosanitary control and organic fertilization.

Marcelo Collao, a former staff member of SDC explains that this programme began after Switzerland realized that potato production was one of the major contributions of Bolivia and of the Andean region to the world.

Presently, Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa (SEPA), the main shareholder of which to date is Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agrícola y Forestal (INIAF), continues with its work and has agreements with several seed producers in the country.

Mixed companies, in the interest of nutrition

For José Luis Pereira, National Officer of SDC’s Economic Development and Climate Change Programme in Bolivia, food production was ensured by the support given to the creation of mixed companies (organizations in which capital and management are shared between private and public parties).

The mixed companies generated synergies between the State — mainly through the public universities — and private shareholders who were the producers. This joint work led to the emergence of Empresa Universitaria de Semillas Forrajeras (SEFO), Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa (UPS-SEPA) and Centro de Investigación, Formación y Extensión Mecánica Agrícola (CIFEMA), among others.

“What the country needed at the time was to develop, to have companies that were sustainable and able to provide services in key development matters needed by the food chain, and for them to guide food security,” explains Pereira.

The mixed companies contributed towards a sustainable model that had an effect in improving the economies of thousands of producer families. These families obtained, and continue to obtain, income year-round thanks to seed production.

The advancement of these undertakings led to the implementation of technologies allowing to strengthen food security and competitiveness in terms of producer systems, certification, plant protection, agroindustry, and biotechnology.

The seed custodians

Those dedicated to managing a diversity of crops have been given different names: seed experts, nodal farmers, seed conservers, curious ones, conservationists, innovators, seed guardians, and custodian farmers.

In Bolivia there are farmers who dedicate their lives and experiences to protecting seeds, and who are able to “share their plant material, knowledge, heritage, and culture with their families, communities and society at large,” states the report titled “Custodian farmers and community seed banks: strengthening in situ conservation of agrobiodiversity in Bolivia”, of the Promoción e Investigación de Productos Andinos (PROINPA) foundation.

Between 2011 and 2013, a group of 43 custodian farmers participated in the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) project called Forgotten or Underutilized Species. The initiative had the support of four partner institutions: CARE Bolivia, Samaritan’s Purse, CETHA Tupak Katari, and the PROINPA foundation. This

project’s activities were executed in eight communities of the area surrounding Lake Titicaca.

Thanks to the contribution of this group of seed experts, in the two years the project lasted it was possible for every custodian farmer to register agrobiodiversity in a book titled “Communal Registry of Biodiversity”. Up to 20 seed varieties, with photographs of them, were catalogued.

The PROINPA foundation, established in 1988, is one of the most successful projects, given its significant contributions to farming innovation, such as maintaining agrobiodiversity with different products, research in agroecology, bio-input production, etc. In SDC’s 2014 annual report, José Gandarillas, manager of the PROINPA foundation, highlighted this contribution: “Swiss support was essential for PROINPA’s development. It allowed us to train several young professionals in master’s and doctorate degrees and to have good working spaces, as well as specialized laboratories and greenhouses”.



Tuber production and harvest. Photo: Economic Development Programme.

Presently **PROINPA is one of the main supporters of Sistema Boliviano de Tecnología Agropecuaria** and has a major germplasm bank.





Rufino Ortiz. Photo: Mauricio Gonzales.

Rufino Ortiz, the custodian of native potatoes

Testimonial

Don Rufino Ortiz lives in Primera Candelaria of the Municipality of Colomi, in Cochabamba, and has been dedicated to farming for many years. Now, aged 56, he recalls that when he was young there was no lack of rain, but since 1999 rainfall decreased, and since 2019 scarcity of rain has been felt even more. This situation made the needs of the municipality change, it being one of the most important potato producers, with 64 varieties.

Don Rufino knows that in his region, potatoes are produced in three ecological floors: in the high part of

the hills potatoes are cultivated for seeds; in the middle part for consumption; and in the lower part for sale. However, since 2015, this traditional distribution has been affected by lack of rain. The community members of Candelaria opted for recovering lagoons through water harvesting in the upper part of the hills. From there they guide the water through pipes that reach the crops, applying a system of mechanized irrigation.

Between 2019 and 2020, 160 families of Primera Candelaria benefitted from mechanized irrigation. This work was done with the support of the Biocultura project, executed by ProRural and PROINPA, and financed by SDC.

Recovery of native potatoes

Don Rufino declares that with the new irrigation system it was even possible to recover the production of other native potatoes in Colomi.

He says that before only waycha potatoes (red and medium-sized) were produced, a variety which is also known also as gourmet potato, Imilla potato (with at least 14 sprouts and from purple to violet in colour) and koyo potatoes (yellow with few orifices — holes). Also being produced now is the pinta boca (“mouth staining”) variety, which is purple and leaves marks when it is peeled, as well as yana q’oyllu, that has a black peel and deep sprouts, and puka q’oyllu, that is reddish, with deep sprouts, among others. Potato tubers have orifices (holes) called “eyes”.

Don Rufino sells the potatoes in the markets of La Paz, Oruro and Santa Cruz. Improved potatoes are given priority for sale and native potatoes for consumption. It is important to highlight that part of the project’s contribution was the opening up of markets for native potatoes, which are presently highly valued.



Diversity of native potatoes. Photo: Biocultura project.



Researcher of Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agrícola y Forestal (INIAF) with seedlings of different genetic origin. Photo: Economic Development Programme.

Technological innovation and knowledge transfer

Technological innovation opened up the possibility of having tools for the local leaders to propose solutions in matters of crops, types of financing and other forms of production. Between 1978 and 2015, SDC supported initiatives that fostered these actions in favour of food production. The result of this continuous and rigorous work prompted the creation of Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agrícola y Forestal (INIAF), which is in charge of leading the agricultural and forestry innovation processes in the country.

Technological innovation

1979

Birth of Centro de Investigación, Formación y Extensión Mecánica Agrícola (CIFEMA), in coordination with Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS). This centre installed agricultural machinery workshops for improving the production of small and medium-sized farmers of Cochabamba.

1999

Agreement between UMSS and SDC comes to an end. **CIFEMA-SAM is to become a mixed company,** with public and private capital.

2007

The Innovación Tecnológica en la Agricultura (PIC) programme begins, with coverage in 26 municipalities in four departments. The initiative was executed with the Department Council for Competitiveness of Cochabamba and Chuquisaca, and with Red de Apoyo al Sector Productivo of Tarija.

2013

The PIC project transfers its model to the state entity INIAF, and through it to Sistema Nacional de Innovación Agrícola Forestal (SNIAF). This transfer lasted two years.

Elizabeth Claros shares theoretical and practical knowledge

Testimonial

Elizabeth Claros, a producer from Arbieta, Cochabamba, learned to produce peaches from her parents, who transferred their knowledge to her. She in turn shared this knowledge with the new generations. This experience led her to have other dreams: multiplying quality certified plants through the Formación Técnica de Productores de Duraznos project in the Valle Alto (Upper Valley) of Cochabamba.

Through this project, Elizabeth learned to produce seedlings free of pathogens in professionally managed nurseries, to validate and recover root stock grafts better adapted to the soil of Valle Alto and to comply with regulations for offering the certified plants. It was not an easy task, but after adding technical knowledge to what she knew, she began to operate a greenhouse with sprinkler irrigation and semi-shade for realizing her dream of implementing technological innovation in this field.

“For the first time, we the producers directly acquired innovating theoretical and practical knowledge from other producers, from our facilitators, in a horizontal manner with friendship and respect,” explained Claros a year later. She was happy to have completed the training process which began in 2011 thanks to Instituto Tecnológico de Tarata in coordination with FAUTAPO.

Arbieta, Punata, Cliza, Tarata, San Benito, and Tolata were the municipalities of Cochabamba that were part of the project through which Elizabeth realized her objectives.

In this space, she was able to deepen her knowledge of soil yield, genetic resources, and strategies for penetrating the local and national markets.

This training process emerged as an initiative of Plataforma de Coordinación Interinstitucional e Innovación Tecnológica de Frutas de Valle (PLACIITFV), an organization made up of fruit producers and the municipalities of Valle Alto of Cochabamba for qualifying farmer skills.

One of the aspects of the project was Programa de Innovación Continua (Continuous Innovation Programme — PIC), a sphere that contributed to the development of the Bolivian farm sector, financed by SDC. This initiative fostered technological innovation processes for contributing towards reducing poverty.

Marcelo Collao, National Officer of SDC’s Economic Development Programme mentions that PIC’s innovation was not necessarily only technological, but also a matter of social innovation, and innovation of spaces, management and territorial governance.

For example, PIC, identified the work of farmers who achieved better results. It also patented their knowledge and shared it with other producers. As a result, many farmers were able to expand the harvest period, improving family income by 54% due to the perfecting of agricultural activities.

PIC worked in 13 strategic fields: maize, peanuts, grapes, hot peppers, wheat, beans, poultry, fruit trees, native potatoes, Andean roots, cut flowers, and amaranth.



The innovation

The implementation of innovating technological models was a bid with an immediate repercussion on projects related to improving the wellbeing of rural producers and reducing poverty. Since early on, SDC's bid was in forming and training qualified manual labour in the agro-mechanical sector, with the aim of reducing human effort and improving production methods. For example, PIC established three innovation platforms for the departments of Cochabamba, Chuquisaca and

Tarija. These platforms allowed developing new varieties of cultivated plants including peaches, maize, peanuts, hot peppers, beans, and wheat, among others.

Given its experience in the field, from October 2013 to 2015, PIC transferred its work model to Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agrícola y Forestal (INIAF), the State entity in charge of farm innovation processes in the country.

Appropriate mechanization

For complementing the increase in farm productivity in Bolivia, SDC also fostered the use of mechanical traction ploughs, among other agricultural equipment. The initiative was realized together with Centro de Investigación, Formación y Extensión Mecánica Agrícola (CIFEMA).

CIFEMA emerged in 1979 through an agreement between Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS) and SDC. Its general aim was to increase agricultural productivity in

Bolivia, reducing human effort and improving production methods. Technical advising was provided during the phases of introduction and development, together with economic resources for infrastructure, machinery and vehicles.

In 1999, the agreement between UMSS and SDC came to an end, and CIFEMA-SAM became a mixed economy company; that is, it worked with capital from the public university and with private producer capital

Comprehensiveness and local knowledge

A comprehensive perspective was key in the accompanying of development that SDC did in Bolivia; a quantity of variables were considered transversally in the productive projects, from a diversity of fields.

Marcelo Collao explains for example that the subject of seeds was related not only to the productive and economic spheres, but also to biodiversity, climate change, governance, and gender.

Finally, one of the most important challenges in terms of seed production was to foster processes that did not enter into conflict with traditional methods, but rather were alternatives allowing the improvement of traditional production through the implementation of modern farming techniques.



*Bertino Rocha, bean producer.
Photo: Ámbito de Desarrollo Económico.*

Bertino Rocha, the first bean farmer

Testimonial

Aged almost 80, Don Bertino Rocha, a small farmer from Mairana, still remembers when a new type of bean arrived in the valleys of Santa Cruz. It was the end of the 1970s, and given that the north of Santa Cruz is a tropical region at over one thousand metres above sea level, with a temperate climate, it was ideal for producing seed varieties of this legume. This made Don Bertino one of the first farmers to experiment with the new product.

The aim of introducing beans in Santa Cruz was to involve Bolivia in the production of foods with high value in vegetable protein that would contribute to improving the nutritional standards of consumers and provide farmers with new income options.

The proposal of introducing beans in Santa Cruz in 1979 was made by Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas “El Vallecito” (IIA El Vallecito), part of Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno (UAGRM) and Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT-Colombia), with the support of SDC.

“They brought material from Colombia and asked me to cultivate in an irrigated plot of land that I had,” said Don Bertino in an interview published in the SDC bulletin, in 2016.

Until that year, Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas “El Vallecito” — located in the Department of Santa Cruz—

had this mode of work: for each 100 lbs. of seeds provided to the farmer, 200 lbs. were demanded in return.

The large farming companies also operated in the same manner; however, unlike “El Vallecito”, that gave priority to internal consumption, the companies exported the beans.

As a result of this joint work, in 2014, in the Department of Santa Cruz, this crop expanded. The largest sowing area in the eastern plains was in the winter season, and ended up covering at least 85% of all the planted area of Bolivia.



*Bean harvest. Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas “El Vallecito”.
Photo: Economic Development Programme.*



Woman from the northern Amazon region trained in financial education by the PROFIN foundation. Photo: Economic Development Programme.

Fostering the development of financial services in rural areas

An efficient financial sector is essential for the economic development of any country, as it allows mobilizing savings and making productive investments. One of SDC's objectives was to improve the performance of productive activities in Bolivia, providing financing and economic resources for improving the opportunities of the women and men rural producers. With this aim, between 1992 and 2023, through the Inclusive Markets Project (previously named Rural Markets), work was done on several programmes and regulations that provided incentives for private financial entities to open up their portfolios to rural development with specific products and financing. Presently this initiative is still supported by Swedish cooperation.

Financial resources for rural sectors

1989

Birth of the Non-governmental Organization Support Programme (NOGUB), promoting financing and projects with components to foster agricultural production.

1995

The Popular Microcredit Programme creates a Rural Financial System Committee, that presents policy guidelines for the development of the rural financial system to the Ministry of Economic Development.

1997

The Financial Sector Support Programme (PROFIN) is created, which enables access to financial resources for poor rural sectors in over 191 municipalities of the country.

2014

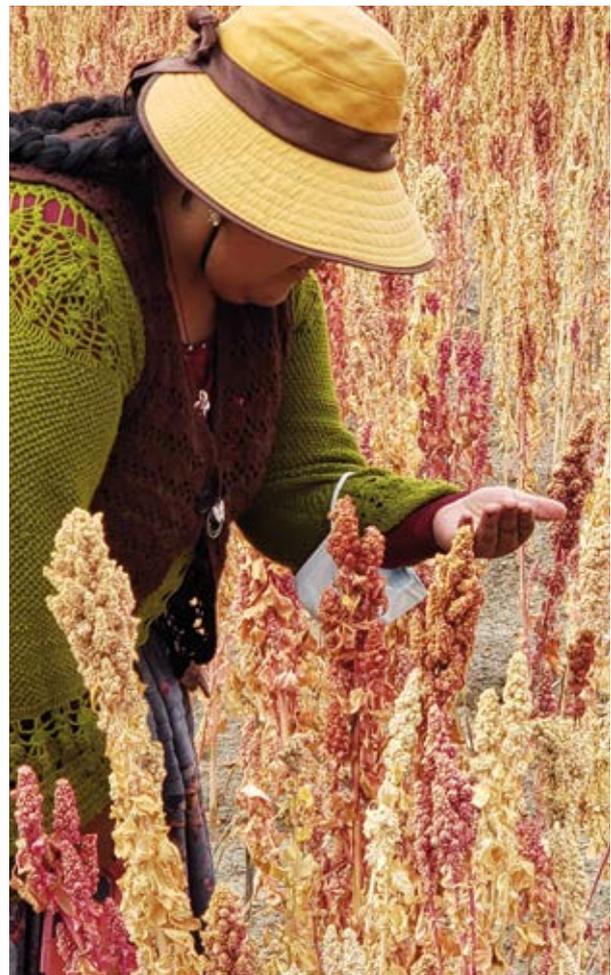
Birth of Fomento Empresarial (Enterprise Fostering – FOMEN), which is executed in the Departments of La Paz, Santa Cruz, Potosí, and in the City of El Alto. Its aim is to increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Wearing a red cap and her habitual traditional skirt dress, Jessica Yana overcame shyness and fear to become the first Aymara to pilot a drone in the agricultural field. She is from the Province of Camacho, in the Department of La Paz. She loves the countryside, and this made her decide to study Agricultural Engineering at Universidad Pública de El Alto (UPEA).

Like most women from the High Plateau (Altiplano) of La Paz, Jessica was shy and reserved until she had the opportunity to do an internship at Biotop, an agricultural service company that provides services of biological origin (bio-inputs), where she was hired to pilot a drone.

This internship was possible in the scope of the service that Biotop has been offering since 2019, supported by the Inclusive Markets Project, and funded by SDC in Bolivia. Implementation was done by the Swisscontact-Fundación para el Desarrollo Productivo y Financiero (PROFIN) consortium. The initiative consisted in spraying by drones, ideal for small-scale farmers. The aim of this work was to reduce production costs, increase efficiency in pest and disease control, and reduce the use of synthetic inputs.

Yana and the rest of the Biotop staff took on the challenge of flying drones above fields for reducing the time taken to fumigate quinoa crops, thus making technological innovation reach family farming.



*Inspection of quinoa crops.
Photo: Inclusive Markets Project.*

2001

Pro-Rural was founded, with the NOGUB team as its basis. This initiative fostered the development and strengthening of rural economic units and their organizations.

2010

Birth of Programa de Servicios para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural (PROSEDER) in 30 municipalities of the Altiplano and inter-Andean valleys, as well as Padilla and Tomina (Chuquisaca), and Entre Ríos and Yacuiba (Tarija).

2012

Start of the Inclusive Insurance Project, which proposes to cover the specific needs of protection against climate risks in agricultural production for small farmers in a simple and accessible way.

1998

Beginning of the Rural/Inclusive Markets Project, as a proposal for improving access to markets for people dedicated to farming activities in 41 municipalities of La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca.

Inclusive Markets

As was the case with Biotop, other companies benefitted from Mercados Inclusivos (Inclusive Markets), a project with the aim of allowing small producers to access markets and providing them with inputs, services, knowledge, and technology, among other goods.

This project began in 2017, but its direct predecessor was the Mercados Rurales (Rural Markets) Project, which initiated operations in 2014 with the aim of strengthening the dynamics between private and public economic players in rural areas. The initiative emerged from SDC, and was executed by Swisscontact and Fundación para el Desarrollo Productivo y Financiero (PROFIN).

The Inclusive Markets Project allowed producer families the possibility of increasing their sales or reducing production costs by improving their access to and their participation in markets. Also, one of its premises was to concentrate on women and youth, for them to access inputs, technology, information services, and loan markets, among others.

“This project has a very attractive added value, which is that we work with a large number of

local organizations that develop skills and also associate with each other,” explains the Inclusive Markets Project’s Director, Sandra Nisttahusz.

In its first phase, Rural Markets, which operated between 2014 and 2017, work was done with 90 public and private organizations. Given its achievements, the Inclusive Markets Project was consolidated, which operated from 2017 to 2023. The project had funding from SDC and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and continues to operate with funds from SIDA.

Among its concerns, the Inclusive Markets Project sought to foster the development and strengthening of financial services (credit, savings, insurance) and non-financial services (technical assistance, market information) in rural areas. This allowed producer families to optimize productive resources (equipment, tools, and bio-inputs, among others) in their economic activities as a result of better access to financial services. This meant that the producers became able to obtain bank financing.

Rural Markets achieved a 5% increase in the farm loans portfolios of financial entities associated with the project.



Sale of products. Photo: Inclusive Markets Project.

Opportunities for rural sectors

The strengthening of rural markets fostered by SDC is not recent; rather, it is the result of constant hard work. The plan began in the 1980s, when it was not common for financial entities to provide credits to small and medium-sized rural producers.

After understanding that in order to improve productivity, systemic solutions must be provided, one of the first actions of SDC was to aim to strengthen financial resources for rural sectors in Bolivia. With this objective, the efforts of the so-called non-governmental financial organizations were supported in their consolidation and self-regulation.

Access to capital

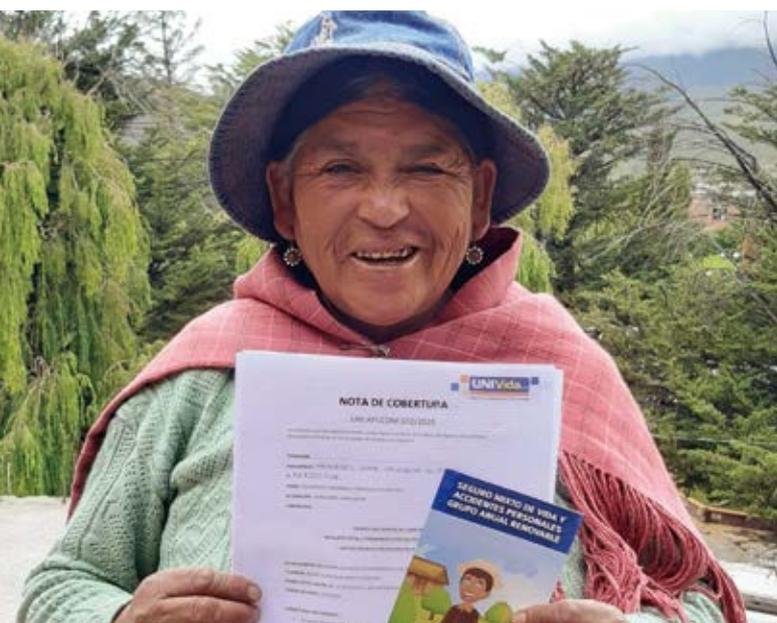
Among the most important outreaches of this legacy is access to investment capital through a contract model that employs agricultural production as valid collateral, and support for the producers of coffee and rice seeds. This task was performed by means of warrant microcredits.

In this line of work, SDC became a key player. From a macroeconomic perspective, the development of financial services, rotating funds, credits, and the visibility of rural markets were fostered.

The possibility of investment and access to services of payments, loans and insurance offered fresh opportunities to rural households through the strengthening of the productive units and the establishment of small enterprises (seedling and seed production, and farm services, among others). This also allowed improving the capacity to face situational market fluctuations.

Warrant microcredits are loans designed for producers to have immediate access to financing, with only the production itself as collateral.

Among the first commitments was Programa de Apoyo al Sector Financiero (PROFIN), which fostered, since 1997, microfinance inclusion and innovation for the most disadvantaged segments of the Bolivian population. The purpose of this programme was to allow the farm sector access to comprehensive financial services that were equitable and adequate for improving production, increasing income and generating better living conditions.



Producer receives her life insurance policy. Photo: Programa Seguros Inclusivos.

Since the 1980s, **SDC associated producers with the microfinance system**, which was fostered through various programmes and projects.

This initiative's success was consolidated through institutionalization of the experience. This allowed the constitution of the PROFIN foundation in 2006, created through a bi-agency effort between Switzerland and Denmark. PROFIN is a private non-profit organization that followed the trajectory initiated by the PROFIN programme. The foundation acquired ownership of the experience and learning in the field of microfinance.

Another SDC programme that continues the work in supporting small producers and microenterprises, which began in the 1980s was Fomento Empresarial (FOMEN). The entity initiated in 1998 and contributed to combatting poverty through income and employment generation by means of its relationship with different actors, such as private companies, union organizations, and other cooperation programmes.

.....▶ **PROFIN contributed to making the rural productive sector have access to comprehensive, equitable and adequate financial services.** ◀.....

Inclusive insurance

Climate change is increasingly affecting agricultural production. This situation harms not only the families that depend on the income from the sale of their products, but also threatens the country's food security.

One of the preoccupations of the State, non-governmental organizations and international cooperation is to be able to provide insurance to rural actors. Based on this concern, the Inclusive Insurance Project was born in 2012, an initiative executed by the PROFIN foundation

and financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The PROFIN foundation provided access to the protection mechanisms, such as microinsurance, which are low-cost and offer specific coverage.

This project entails two types of insurance: agricultural and personal. By 2022, 68,000 people were part of the project, making it possible for them to access insurance to better face adversities and be more resilient.

.....▶ **By 2022, 68,000 people had benefitted from the Inclusive Insurance Project.** ◀.....



*Damián Heredia in his maize crop.
Photo: Fundación PROFIN.*

Damián Heredia, the small farmer who is sure of his crop

Testimonial

Damián Heredia is an elderly smallholder farmer in the community of Tocopalta, in the Upper Valley (Valle Alto) of the Department of Cochabamba. He dedicated his entire life to producing food such as maize, potatoes and peaches.

Being a producer is not an easy task. Don Damian knows this well, as he suffered on more than one occasion from the effects of drought, hail and floods. These natural phenomena wiped out his production, leading to the loss of his entire investment.

“Sometimes, certain years, there is drought, hail and then frost. There are also winds, floods, and this affects us; we only ask God for help,” says Don Damián with a weary voice.

During most of his life as a farmer, Don Damián’s production had no safeguard. If his crops were lost, there was nothing he could do about it. All his effort in planting maize, peaches and potatoes dissolved into thin air. “If we lost, we lost, and that was it,” he says in a video made by Fundación PROFIN, which became affiliated to Fondo de Transferencia de Riesgos (Risk Transfer Fund — FTR).

FTR was part of the Rural Microinsurance Programme, executed by the PROFIN foundation from 2012 to 2015. The initiative was carried out in the Valle Alto of Cochabamba, the Cintis in Chuquisaca, and in the Chaco region of Chuquisaca.

This project had the support of SDC, in partnership with three strategic partners: Autoridad de Fiscalización y Control de Pensiones y Seguros (the pension fund and insurance regulator — APS), Asociación Boliviana de Aseguradoras (Bolivian Insurance Association — ABA) and SOLIDAR Suisse.

The project generated initiatives and innovations in financial services, and in inclusive agricultural insurance for micro and small producers affected by climate change and by the el Niña and el Niño phenomena.

After hearing the proposal, Don Damián became affiliated and insured his crop. With this, if an adverse event occurs, he will receive an indemnity through index-based insurance. This form of protection is agile and based on a measurement done by an independent company external to the insurance company and the insured party.



Student of Instituto de Aprendizaje Industrial, Oruro. Photo: Programa Formación Técnica Profesional.

Technical training: fostering skills and employment

A window that opens up possibilities, that is how technical training was conceived. It has allowed many people to continue their studies and find their vocation. From 2006 to 2023, SDC decidedly promoted the creation and strengthening of technical training centres in rural and urban areas. It also contributed towards creating the Sistema Plurinacional de Certificación de Competencias (Plurinational Skills Certification System – SPCC), which recognizes skills, knowledge and empirical experience in the productive, artistic and services fields.

Technical training

2006

Beginning of Programa de Capacitación Laboral (Labour Training Programme – PROCAP) in collaboration with different institutions, such as Comisión Episcopal de Educación, Fundación FAUTAPO and the Ministry of Education of Bolivia.

2009

Creation of Sistema Plurinacional de Certificación de Competencias (SPCC). It started as a result of an interinstitutional agreement between the Ministry of Education and COSUDE, for certifying empirically acquired knowledge.

2010

PROCAP grows and expands its coverage, becoming **Proyecto de Formación Técnica Profesional (Technical Professional Training Project – FTP).**

2014

The FTP improves the conditions of 72 public technical training centres, strengthening 172 careers, benefitting more than 14,000 youth of the country. The campaign named “Retoma tu formación”, which aims to combat educational dropout is initiated.



*Dayana Balboa in her car repair shop.
Photo: Programa Formación Técnica
Profesional.*

Dayana Balboa, passion for auto mechanics

Testimonial

Dayana Balboa always wanted to study something she was passionate about. With this feeling, and decided on becoming a great professional, she registered in the auto mechanics programme at Centro de Educación Alternativa (CEA) Hermano Nilo Cullen, in the Municipality of Caranavi, Department of La Paz.

For her, determination is important in life, because in her opinion, whether one reaches his or her dreams and goals in life depends on being determined, besides proving effort and dedication.

This institution is one of the first alternative centres of Caranavi, with over 200 students from different communities of the CEA's area of influence, covering the cantons of Taipiplaya and Río Mercedes in rural Caranavi, and San Lorenzo and Alcoche.

The Hermano Nilo Cullen CEA is one of the active centres that participates in the Formación Técnica Profesional programme, which is financed by SDC. It offers the technical fields of metal-mechanics, auto mechanics and agriculture for soil recovery, beekeeping, garment making, and computing.

"Since I was little girl, I used to play around with loudspeakers, and [because of this] I later asked myself, 'Why can't I touch cars; there are so many of them and of all models. And then I thought, if my brother studies at that institution, why not me?'" said Dayana in an interview held for the Formación Técnica Profesional project.

For Dayana, her future is very clear for when she finishes her studies. She will open up an injector washing shop. Her knowledge of preventive and corrective maintenance, as well as of brake systems, prompt her to establish an enterprise in the near future.

Economic reactivation and labour insertion

SDC is one of the promoters of technical training in Bolivia, an educational strategy that showed substantial results in terms of economic and labour development in Switzerland.

Since 2006, for SDC, technical training was conceived not only as a contribution to educational policy, but

was also considered to be a way of fostering the skills of youth and adults, productive development, economic reactivation, and labour insertion.

The Capacitación Laboral (PROCAP) programme began as a seed for improving the socio-productive profiles of the population of the Altiplano and inter-Andean valleys



of Bolivia. Similarly, it fostered the development of job skills in rural areas with the aim of improving access to employment and self-employment.

The first PROCAP phase was executed from 2006 to 2010 and had four components done in collaboration with different institutions, such as Comisión Episcopal de Educación, Fundación Educación para el Desarrollo (FAUTAPO) and the Ministry of Education.

“Technical training has always been considered a second-class training for people who do not have the options to go to university or to follow other educational paths; however, this training constitutes a window for many

things,” says Eliana Arauco, who was the first coordinator of the project.

Following its first phase, and based on its good results, PROCAP continued with other phases. Thus, in 2010 the programme was named Formación Técnica Profesional (Professional Technical Training — FTP). More partnerships were added for implementation, such as the Autonomous Municipal Government of La Paz, the Centro de Multiservicios Educativo (CEMSE) consortium, Unidad Educativa Fe y Alegría, Universidad La Salle, and Infocal, among other private institutions and international cooperation.

.....▶ Between 2018 and 2023, the geographical area of intervention of the **Formación Técnica Profesional project reached 42 municipalities, 76 technical centres and 142 areas of study** that received technical and financial assistance. ◀.....



Some of the 37,000 graduates of Sistema Plurinacional de Certificación de Competencias (SPCC). Photo: Programa Formación Técnica Profesional.

Certification of skills

A second contribution of SDC in technical training was support for Sistema Plurinacional de Certificación de Competencias (Plurinational Skills Certification System — SPCC), which entered into force with the approval of Supreme Decree No. 29876 of 2008.

“Through SPCC we sought to open up opportunities for people with some kind of disability, for them to have a future with a technical degree in some field,” states Amparo Ergueta, National Officer of the programme at SDC.

Since its inception, SPCC has certified the skills of over 37,000 people nationwide and in different domains through certificates approved by the State.

An important milestone is the support for the consolidation and decentralization of the Plurinational Skills Certification System, which is presently under the care of the Vice-Ministry of Alternative and Special Education.

Certification is granted after acquiring the knowledge, practices and experiences needed for a series of occupations, such as garment maker, carpenter, and farmer, among others.

.....▶ An important milestone is the consolidation of the **Plurinational Skills Certification System**, presently performed by the Vice-Ministry of Alternative and Special Education. ◀.....

Chocolate from Bolivia in Switzerland



Cacao producer. Photo: PIAF El Ceibo.

Testimonial

Organic tropical chocolate refined in Switzerland is a delicacy that has won over Swiss palates since 1988, thanks to Bolivian cooperative El Ceibo. This cooperative was able to export its certified bitter chocolate through the support of the Swiss chocolate companies Claro and Bernrain AG. These companies fostered commercial and technical growth.

Bolivian quality cocoa

The El Ceibo cooperative, which groups together 49 Bolivian agricultural cooperatives, is dedicated to supplying high quality raw material, such as the cocoa beans cultivated in the region of Alto Beni. With the support of the prestigious Swiss chocolate company Claro (renowned for promoting responsible consumption and

production), which concentrates on supporting small producers of the South, El Ceibo was able to open fair trade channels to the markets of the North. El Ceibo has come a long way since its founding in 1977; in 1985 it established its production centre in El Alto, La Paz.

Direct Swiss support for the producer

As a result of its dedication and the assistance received from Claro and COSUDE, El Ceibo became one of the first producers in the world to prepare its own cocoa powder and cocoa butter. Besides this, in 1987 the cooperative adopted organic agriculture and one year later exported the first certified biological cocoa to Switzerland. Claro Fair Trade was key in this progress and in launching the first fair trade chocolate, Mascao, in 1991.

El Ceibo's success was reflected in its trade relationship with the Swiss company Bernrain AG, to which they sell cocoa beans, cocoa butter and cocoa powder. El Ceibo took on the challenge of making bitter chocolate with an intense flavour, using 71% organic cocoa, and has even developed a fine chocolate. This has generated annual export figures of over USD 1.5 million, of which USD 600,000 correspond to the Swiss market, benefitting approximately 1,500 families that work with El Ceibo.

Swisscontact and Chocolates Cándor

Another Bolivian company, Chocolates Cándor, has gone from being a family-owned company that produced confectionery and small homemade style chocolates, to become a factory with an imposing presence in the Bolivian market. Thanks to the support of Switzerland, through the Swisscontact foundation, the company improved in terms of administration and the quality of its chocolate.

Claro, Bernrain AG and Swisscontact, with the support COSUDE, have a fair trade bridge benefitting Bolivian producers of fine cocoa. In this manner, fair trade is respected and the environment is cared for, making it possible to enjoy, also in Switzerland, the exquisite refined organic tropical chocolate.



Cocoa producer meeting. Photo: Chocolates El Ceibo.



Heriberto harvesting his own production. Photo: Programa Formación Técnica Profesional.

Heriberto aspires to producing peppers in his community, and Santusa dreams of offering a delicious variety of pastries for sale. For reaching their objectives, both train at the productive workshops of Centro de Educación Especial “Luis Anselmo Farfán Quiroga”, of the Municipality of Padcaya, in the Department of Tarija.

This centre specializes in training in the technical domains for people with some kind of disability, and who – like Santusa and Heriberto, show interest and the desire to realize their goals for generating income. The fields of study offered by the centre are bread-making, pastry-making and agriculture.

This educational institution has the support of the Formación Técnica Profesional project (Professional Technical Training — FTP), financed by Switzerland and executed by the Swisscontact-FAUTAPO consortium. This initiative, that promotes technical training, contributes to allowing a sizeable sector of society to become autonomous in social and economic terms by means of training in a technical field, developing skills enabling them to carry out an economic activity and participate in inclusive employment together with their families.

Leaving footprints in Economic Development

Chronology of flagship projects

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1972	2000	SEFO-SAM	Semilla Forrajera Forage Seeds
1978	1998	CIFEMA-SAM	Proyecto Centro de Investigación, Formación y Extensión Mecánica Agrícola Research, Training, and Mechanical Agricultural Outreach Centre Project
1978	2007	SEPA-SAM	Proyecto Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa Potato Seeds Production Unit Project
1983	2002	NOGUB	Programa de Apoyo a Organizadores no Gubernamentales Support for Non-governmental Organizations Programme
1984	2006	AGRUCO	Agroecología Universidad de Cochabamba Universidad de Cochabamba Agroecology
1989	2006	PROINPA	Programa de Investigación de la Papa Potato Research Programme
1992	2003	BIODIV-RTA	Proyecto Coservación Biodiversidad de Raíces y Tubérculos Andinos Biodiversity of Andean Roots and Tubers Conservation Project
1992	2008	PROSUKO	Programa Interinstitucional de Suka Kollus Suka Kollus Interinstitutional Programme
1995	2000	FIE-Crédito	Proyecto FIE- CREDITO FIE- CREDITO Project
1997	2006	PROFIN	Programa Apoyo al Sector Financiero Financial Sector Support Programme
1998	2009	FOMEN	Fomento Empresarial Entrepreneurial Support
1998	2010	PAPA ANDINA	Proyecto Regional de Papa Regional Potato Project
2001	2016	PRONALAG	Proyecto Nacional de Leguminosas National Legume Project
2006	2017	PRO-CAP	Proyecto Capacitación Laboral Labour Training Project
2006	2023	FTP	Proyecto Formación Técnica Profesional Professional Technical Training Project
2007	2015	PIC	Programa Innovación Tecnológica en la Agricultura Agricultural Technological Innovation Programme
2010	2015	PROSEDER	Programa de Servicios para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural Rural Entrepreneurial Development Services Programme
2012	2022	SI	Proyecto Seguros Inclusivos Inclusive Insurance Project
2013	2017	PMR	Proyecto Mercados Rurales Rural Markets Project
2014	2023	PROMYPE-JIWASA	Proyecto PROMYPE-JIWASA PROMyPE-JIWASA Project
2017	2023	MI	Proyecto Mercados Inclusivos Inclusive Markets Project

Some figures

- **Rurales Markets**

57,400 Family Productive Units (UPF) with net access to services/products/markets.

- **Inclusive Markets**

52,739 men and women improve their employment and self-employment conditions by 2022.

- **Professional Technical Training**

127,437 participants and **64,151** graduates concluded their professional technical learning and training processes by 2023.

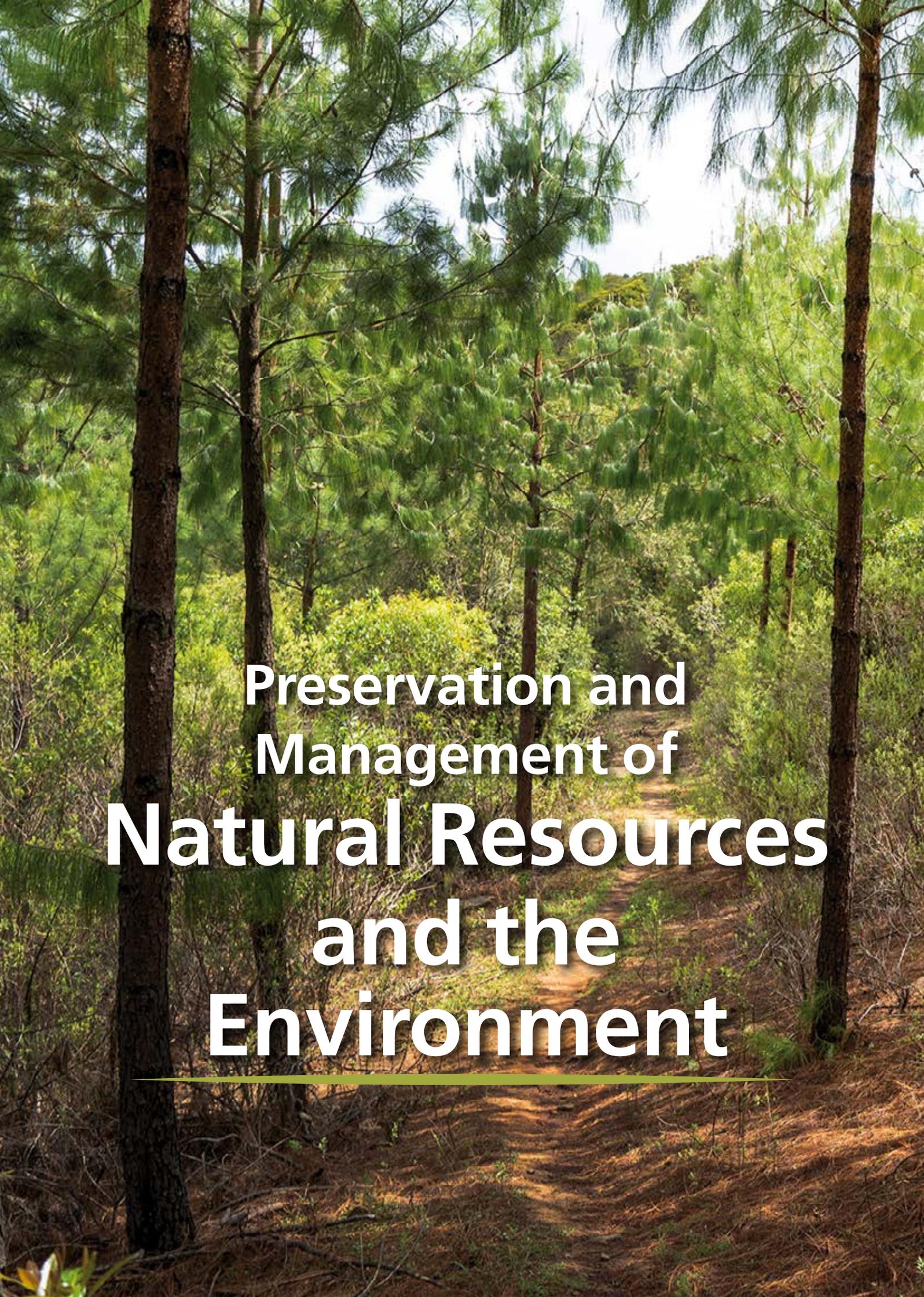
- **SEFO-SAM Forage Seeds**

770 tons of seeds exported by 2014.

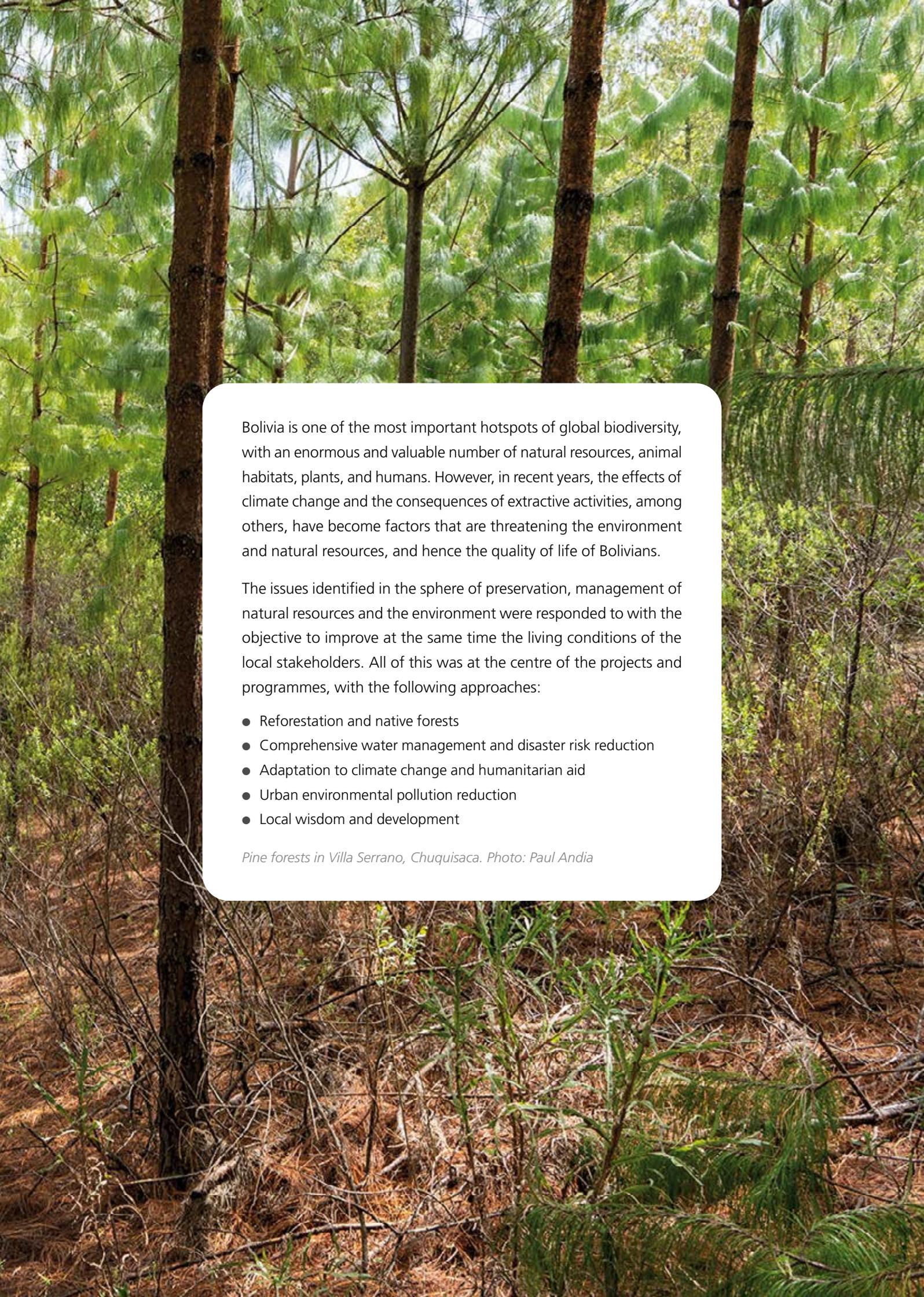
60% of domestic demand for forage seeds was supplied by SEFO in 1986.

40 different species offered to the market,

15,000 tons of seeds sold, and **1,500,000** hectares of forage crops sown by 2014.

A photograph of a dense forest of tall pine trees. The trees are green and have long, thin needles. A dirt path winds through the forest, leading towards the background. The ground is covered in brown pine needles and some small green plants. The sky is visible through the canopy of the trees.

**Preservation and
Management of
Natural Resources
and the
Environment**



Bolivia is one of the most important hotspots of global biodiversity, with an enormous and valuable number of natural resources, animal habitats, plants, and humans. However, in recent years, the effects of climate change and the consequences of extractive activities, among others, have become factors that are threatening the environment and natural resources, and hence the quality of life of Bolivians.

The issues identified in the sphere of preservation, management of natural resources and the environment were responded to with the objective to improve at the same time the living conditions of the local stakeholders. All of this was at the centre of the projects and programmes, with the following approaches:

- Reforestation and native forests
- Comprehensive water management and disaster risk reduction
- Adaptation to climate change and humanitarian aid
- Urban environmental pollution reduction
- Local wisdom and development

Pine forests in Villa Serrano, Chuquisaca. Photo: Paul Andia



Pine forests in Villa Serrano, Chuquisaca. Photo: Paul Andia.

Forests, hope for a better tomorrow

Before climate change and care for the environment were a matter of worldwide interest, SDC supported, since 1979, the sustainable use of natural resources as a transversal axis in its diverse programmes and projects. To this end, it created two reforestation initiatives, one in Cochabamba and the other in Chuquisaca. It also focused on the reforestation and conservation of native forests linked to the development of the communities and care for forest seeds.

Reforestation and native forests

1979

The first reforestation initiatives start with species such as eucalyptus and *Pinus radiata* in Cochabamba. The aim was to combat deforestation affecting the water system of the southern hillside of Tunari National Park.

1985

Programa de Repoblamiento Forestal (Forestry Reforestation Programme – PROFOR) is born in Cochabamba. In partnership with Corporación de Desarrollo de Cochabamba (CORDECO), over 15,000,000 native trees were planted in the Andean zone of the region throughout the project.

1990

Programa Agroforestal (Agroforestry Programme – PLAFOR) is implemented in the valleys of Chuquisaca to revert the long process of destruction of natural and agroforestry resources, in partnership with Corporación de Desarrollo de Chuquisaca (CORDECH) and other institutions.

At the end of the 1970s, the hills and other areas of Chimboco — a community located in the Municipality of Sacaba, Cochabamba — suffered harsh deforestation of its areas with tree coverage. The problem was confronted, and today the scenery is different, as now there is an abundance of *Pinus radiata*, among other tree species, as well as seedlings cultivated by local producers.

The trees not only reforest the area, which is part of the Taquiña watershed, but are also taken advantage of by the local inhabitants, who benefit from the sale of wood and firewood.

For reaching this point, since 1979, SDC has worked assiduously. In 1985, the undertaking led to the creation of Programa de Repoblamiento Forestal Cochabamba (Cochabamba Forestry Reforestation Programme — FOREST/PROFOR), the aim of which was to protect the watersheds of the southern hillside of the Tunari National Park and combat the deforestation that affected the water irrigation system and agricultural production in the zone.

The programme’s technicians held a series of conversations with community residents to reforest communal land. Thus, the first large greenhouse was created, which

marked the beginning of other similar initiatives replicated along the Taquiña basin.

“The first 15 years were for separating and caring [for the plants in the plantations], and after a few years there were already impressive patches of forestation visible, such as in Chimboco, which is on the road to the Chapare region,” states Carlos Carafa, who was part of SDC in those years.

Although at first few community residents took advantage of the wood, in 2022 already there were many wood-producing community enterprises supplying this raw material to businesses producing furniture in Cochabamba and other departments.

Besides taking advantage of the wood, PROFOR fostered continuity of the pine and *Eucalyptus globulus* plantations for domestic ends, to halt soil erosion and keep up the promotion of sustainable use.

1992

Programa Regional de Conservación de Bosques Nativos Andinos (Regional Programme for the Conservation of Native Andean Forests – PROBONA) is born, concentrating on forestry and Andean forests. Intercooperation (currently Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation), World Conservation Union, PROFOR, PLAFOR, and the National Directorate for Forestry Use participated in its creation.

1995

Banco de Semillas Forestales (Forestry Seeds Bank – BASFOR) is created in partnership with the Forestry Science School (ESFOR) of Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS) for conserving forestry and native species, and those in danger of extinction.



Pines at Villa Serrano, Chuquisaca. Photo: Preservation and Management of Natural Resources and the Environment.

The continuity of reforestation

Ten years later, this experience's success led SDC to execute the Agroforestry Programme (PLAFOR) in the valleys of Chuquisaca. The programme was implemented to revert the long process of destruction of the forest and tree resources of the department.

In this context, several plans were carried out under the generic name Bolivia Agropecuaria "La Chuquisaca Productiva" (Farming Bolivia "Productive Chuquisaca"), such as specific work in the vineyards of the San Pedro Ltda. company and in the Los Sauces pig farm in Monteagudo. In Villa Serrano, projects were implemented for the region's development, standing out among which is potato seed production, of great importance, given that

a harvest of 3,600 kg was achieved with seeds obtained from the work, with the participation of 54 families, in an area of 21 hectares cultivated on the hillsides.

The programme contributed with the first forestry inventories and phenology studies (relationship between climate factors and the cycles of animal and plant species). PLAFOR also trained municipal and institutional actors in awareness of the responsibility of environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.

Both initiatives generated environmental awareness and diversification of the villager families' income, in addition to leading the families to support soil protection.

Native forests and their conservation

In parallel to the reforestation programmes, in the 1990s, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation focused on Andean forestry, the Andean forests and their importance in the complex system tied to the ancestral traditions and customs of the smallholder communities. Thus began Programa Regional de Conservación de Bosques Nativos Andinos (Regional Native Andean Forest Conservation Programme — PROBONA).

PROBONA concentrated efforts on the conservation and sustainable management of native Andean forests and contributed to the political dialogue on the topic in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. It also worked with the communities for them to take ownership of their forests, making efforts for conserving and using them sustainably.

In this context, in 1995 — with a new agreement between SDC and the School of Forestry Sciences (ESFOR) of Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS) — Banco de Semillas Forestales (Forestry Seeds Bank — BASFOR) was created, a genetic centre for conserving forest species, some of them native and others in danger of extinction.

Presently, BASFOR employs a business model of sustainability, and is part of Empresa de Producción de Semillas Forrajeras (Forage Seeds Production Company —SEFO). By 2022, BASFOR covered approximately 100% of the forestry seeds formal market in both the Andean and lowlands (Yungas, Amazon, Chiquitania, Chaco) regions of Bolivia, making it a sustainable business unit.

At the completion of FOREST/PROFOR, in 1989, there were **7,720 hectares reforested in Cochabamba** and PLAFOR concluded the project by **planting trees on 3,200 hectares in Chuquisaca.**



To protect the soil and conserve the geographic watersheds, **BASFOR promoted projects to reforest the Andean zone** with native species such kewiña, kiswara, aliso, and lloque.

The indigenous territory of Lomerío preserves forestry seeds

Testimonial

Two years ago, Laura Medrano taught families of the indigenous territory of Lomerío, in the Department of Santa Cruz, to climb tajibo trees 20 metres high to collect their seeds. One year later, at the end of 2022, the fruit of this teaching was that the indigenous persons of the area harvested and sold their crop to Banco de Semillas Forestales (BASFOR).

Medrano — Director of BASFOR — says that the Chiquitanos not only generated income, but also contributed towards the preservation of forestry seeds for conserving the forests, which due to fires in recent years, are now in danger.

This work was possible thanks to the training done by BASFOR, an institution that works on forestry species conservation since 1995, with the support of SDC in Bolivia.

Medrano speaks emotionally about the results of the training sessions. She recalls that in her recent visit to the indigenous territory of Lomerío in the Municipality of San Antonio de Lomerío, new techniques had to be implemented in collecting seeds, as the tajibos are 20 metres in height.

“During this time, and with all the safety measures in place, we looked for young people who liked to climb trees for collecting the seeds, because they were at the peaks of the trees,” says the Director of BASFOR.

At the territory, the families got organized for the collection: the men climbed the trees and the women and children picked up the seeds on the ground. One year later, the territory of Lomerío sold 10 kilograms

of seeds to BASFOR, representing an income for the indigenous families.

Medrano highlights the fact that the results of SDC’s technology transfer translate into the training of staff and the provision of equipment for the School of Forestry Sciences of Universidad Mayor de San Simón.



*Indigenous peoples of Lomerío collect seeds from the peak of a tajibo tree.
Photo: BASFOR.*



Watering seedlings used for reforestation. Escaleras, Chuquisaca, Proyecto Gestión Integral del Agua. Photo: Mauricio Panozo.

Watershed management and sustainable use of water resources: a task for all

Over 30 years ago, SDC in Bolivia worked towards achieving effective management of water resources, aiming for sustainable growth, and combatting poverty and inequality. At the outset, the importance of water in terms of development of the farm sector was emphasized. Over the years, the projects of reforestation and recovery of degraded areas reoriented this perspective towards protecting water sources through comprehensive management of watersheds for prevention against natural disasters such as floods, reducing their impacts on families and communities. To achieve this, programs influenced national public policies.

Comprehensive management of water and reduction of disaster risks

1991

Programa de Manejo Integral de Cuencas (Comprehensive Watershed Management Programme — PROMIC) is born under an agreement with the Department Government of Cochabamba, to attend to mudslides and landslides in the Taquiña watershed of Cochabamba.

1999

The Agua, Tierra y Campesinado (Water, Land and Farmers — ATICA) project is implemented in municipalities of Cochabamba. The initiative has the aim of local actors starting to optimize the use of water for agriculture and livestock breeding. This proposal was executed by Swisscontact.

2006

The Gobernabilidad para el Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible (Governance for Sustainable Territorial Development — CONCERTAR) programme is born; it works in watershed management with nine unions of joint municipalities in five departments. The work is executed by the development organization now called Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

At the end of the 1990s there were continuously mudslides and landslides in the Taquiña basin, located in the Municipality of Cercado of the Department of Cochabamba. This situation posed a great problem in terms of inadequate supply of water in quantity and quality for the City of Cochabamba and the families of the area. This led the municipal authorities to request help from SDC.

Following an analysis, SDC in Bolivia came to the conclusion that deforestation was one of the reasons for the problem, and that it affected the occurrence of landslides in the upper part of the Taquiña basin. Hence, SDC made a comprehensive proposal, and Programa de Manejo Integral de Cuencas (PROMIC) came into being.

“When we refer to forestry management and reforestation, we are intrinsically talking about watershed management, because runoffs [landslides] are avoided where there is reforestation in the land above,” says the Director of SDC

Bolivia’s Comprehensive Water Management Project (GIA), Javier Zubieta.

SDC benefitted from its prior experience on the topic for putting together the programme. In the first phase, engineering work was concentrated on — the building of gabion dikes, reinforcement of water control and others — but this work could only continue as long as there was external financing, due to its high costs. For this reason, PROMIC fostered comprehensive management of the water resource, which considered watershed management as a comprehensive task.

PROMIC sought to lessen the harm caused by periodical floods in the Cochabamba valley through comprehensive management of the basins of the Tunari mountain range. This task was coordinated among the social actors and with department and municipal institutions.



Technicians measuring the water quality of a river. Photo: Helvetas GIA project.

2010

The Gestión de Recursos Naturales y Cambio Climático (Management of Natural Resources and Climate Change — GESTOR) programme is implemented, for a sustainable use of natural resources in 18 groups of municipalities that agglomerate 147 municipalities of eight departments.

2014

The Gestión Integral del Agua (Comprehensive Water Management — GIA) project is born, aiming to strengthen and transfer skills in water and basin management of the Suches River (on the border between Bolivia and Peru), and the Cotagaita River in Potosí.

2022

With the event “Our legacy, because every drop matters”, organized in La Paz, the GIA **project comes to an end after over 30 years of support from SDC on the matter of water in Bolivia.**

Public policy

SDC has been working for effective management of water resources related to sustainable growth for over three decades. Although initially it dealt with the importance of water in relation to farming activities, over the years it came to prioritize projects for reforestation and recovery of degraded areas.

With this vision, the Manejo Integral de Cuencas (PROMIC) project and the Government of the Department of

Cochabamba, called Prefectura at the time, strengthened public water policies. In the same manner, work was also done at the national level, and as a result the Plan Nacional de Cuencas (National Watershed Plan — PNC) was formulated; it is presently called Plan Plurinacional de Recursos Hídricos (Plurinational Water Resources Plan) and has been headed by the Ministry of the Environment and Water since 2006.

Towards comprehensive management

SDC's trajectory in water concluded in 2022 with the Gestión Integral del Agua (GIA) project, implemented since 2014. This initiative sought to strengthen resilience to climate change for part of the rural population and of small urban centres of the valleys and Altiplano through better water management, introducing governance agreements between the actors for management of the basins or mechanized irrigation systems.

In alignment with Plan Nacional de Cuencas, GIA provided technical assistance to the autonomous department governments of Potosí, Chuquisaca and Tarija, and supported the implementation of public policies for water and basins in agreement with the State's planning system. As a result of these actions, master plans for watershed management entered into force at the national level, as well as the Definition of Strategic and Pedagogical Watersheds as learning spaces for better management of the water resource.

GIA had two phases from 2014 to 2022. The programme focused on managing the basins of the Suches River in La Paz (on the border between Peru and Bolivia) and of the Cotagaita River, associated with four municipalities of Potosí.

One of GIA's goals was to contribute to quality and quantity management of water for 10,000 families of the Suches and Cotagaita basins, to improve their living conditions and resilience (reducing water contamination through agreements with mining cooperatives and by means of participation of the communities and municipalities). This benefitted over 8,200 families who improved their resilience in the face of climate change.

This outlook allowed dealing with issues at different levels, such as the protection of water sources, their sustainable use, the treatment and reutilization of wastewater for its reintegration into the water streams and its downstream use.

Other projects

- The Gobernabilidad para el Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible (CONCERTAR) programme fostered local development with a strategic perspective on the territory.
- The Gestión de Recursos Naturales y Cambio Climático (GESTOR) project contributed to the sustainable use of natural resources, with the aim of improving the quality of life of the population.
- Through CONCERTAR, among other works, it was possible to strengthen the capacities of local actors in different fields such as agreements, coordination and financing of natural resources activities.
- Through GESTOR, work was done in 18 groups of municipalities of 147 municipalities in Beni, Pando, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, Potosí, Oruro, La Paz, and Santa Cruz, as well as with the Autonomous Governments from September 2010 to August 2014, with a cost of USD 16,500,000.

The need to save the Suches River

Testimonial

Some decades ago, the Suches River's water was crystalline, and was used for irrigating crops consumed by the inhabitants of communities in the seven municipalities that the river flows through. However, presently the river is opaque; gold mining performed in the upper part of the watershed contaminates its waters, which discharge into Lake Titicaca.

This river's roots are in the snow-capped mountains, the waters of which flow into the Suches Lagoon, shared by Bolivia and Peru. On the Bolivian side, the basin extends across the municipalities of Pelechuco, Charazani, Mocomoco, Escoma, Puerto Acosta, Puerto Carabuco, and Humanata.

A problem affecting various sectors

Mining and its contamination is a complex matter, as it is related to economic activities which often benefit the community members themselves. Thus, a diversity of coordinated initiatives are needed, involving various sectors. This is how the GIA project understood the situation.

Given this, and through a sustainable management approach to the conflicts, the project developed a series of methodologies that allowed reaching consensus for executing an action plan to benefit everyone. An example of this is the treatment of acid water resulting from mining, and environmental control of waste upstream. These actions were agreed on between a diversity of local actors (cooperatives, community members, municipalities) of the Suches basin.

A councillor the Municipality of Pelechuco, Delia Valencia, explained that formerly the women of the community did not have information on contamination of the Suches River, nor on how it affected agriculture and food. However, since the constitution of Red de

The water's quality is compromised, because cooperative gold miners operate in the upper part of the watershed. Most of these miners employ mercury — a highly toxic heavy metal — in their gold recovery activities.

According to data from Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, leader of the Gestión Integral del Agua (GIA) project funded by SDC, in the Municipality of Pelechuco alone, where the upper basin is located, there are approximately 30 gold cooperatives operating.

Mujeres de la Cuenca Suches (Suches Basin Women's Network), women of the seven municipalities identified the issues and became trained in comprehensive water management. This allowed the communities to jointly make more responsible decisions when facing the negative effects of climate change, and to make better use of water and soil.



Suches River, La Paz. Photo: Omar Torricos.



Producer who benefits from a mesh system for protecting vineyards, Uriondo, Tarija.
Photo: Proyecto Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres y Adaptación al Cambio Climático.

Better safe than sorry, adaptation to climate change

More prolonged periods of drought, more intense floods and other climate phenomena affect people and their activities, mainly in agriculture and livestock breeding. This makes it necessary to strengthen capacities to face adversities. This is how Programa de Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres (Disaster Risk Reduction Programme — PRRD) aimed at strengthening climate resilience with a series of actions, both in the families and at the different levels of the State. Additionally, SDC provided humanitarian aid in the country in response to several effects of global warming.

Climate change and humanitarian aid



Including groups of municipalities [mancomunidades — clusters of municipalities] for providing solutions to the problems of long droughts, floods or frost in locations of the Altiplano and valleys of Bolivia made women and men be increasingly prepared to confront climate change. Besides, risk management units started to operate in the communities.

Thus, where water is scarce, rudimentary reservoir dams or water harvesting are applied. This is the case in the centre of the Aymara culture, Curahuara de Carangas, in Oruro. There, Jesús Huanca saw how in the 1980s a severe drought scourged the Altiplano. Since then, he is conscientious with water; he has a well from which he obtains this resource for irrigating his crops and for the family's consumption.

A related experience is that of Yapuchiri* Francisco Condori, who travels to several communities with his bioindicator wisdom. He is from Cutumasa, in the Municipality of Batallas, of the Department of La Paz. The work done by Francisco is the application of the Yapuchiri model, which consists of observing signs in nature and meteorological information to know when there will be drought, frost or floods. This helps to improve maize farming and reduce risks.

All of these ideas and life experiences were linked together with the implementation of Sistema de Alerta Temprana Agropecuaria Plurinacional (Plurinational Farming Early Warning System SAT-Agro), which allowed integrating technology and local knowledge for climate monitoring.

This system was part of the framework of Programa Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres (PRRD), financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and executed by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

**Yapuchiris are leaders in environmental management and the conservation of the natural resources of their territories on the basis of their ancestral knowledge and contemporary weather updates.*



Francisco Condori. Yapuchiri.
Foto: Gestión Local de Riesgos Agrícolas.

2017

Technology and local knowledge are used together to monitor the weather, providing timely information on threats, through the **creation of Sistema Plurinacional de Alerta Temprana Agropecuaria (Plurinational Farm Early Warning System — SAT Agropecuario).**

2019

SDC's Grupo de Intervención y Apoyo Rápido (Rapid Intervention and Support Group — GIAR) of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid **Programme supports in mitigating fires in the Bolivian Amazon region and Chiquitania.**

Better safe than sorry

After responding to the landslides of the end of the 1990s — as a result of deforestation in the upper parts of the basins of Cochabamba — SDC promoted a line of risk prevention and adaptation to climate change.

Programa Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres, which began in 2005, assisted families of rural and peri-urban areas in preparing themselves to face natural catastrophes related to climate change.

Throughout its four phases (from 2005 to 2018), the programme performed concrete actions, such as strengthening the skills of the actors involved, and preparing tools which aimed to reduce the physical, economic and social impacts of natural disasters in 220 municipalities, 12 groups of municipalities and nine departments.

“Disaster risk reduction is a tool of climate change adaptation,” explains Officer of the National Environment Programme, Rodrigo Villavicencio.

Among the most important tools applied by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation with PRRD is CEDRIG (Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guide, Guía para la Integración del Clima, el Medioambiente y la Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres), which had a significant influence on the resilience of environmental systems and communities. An example of this work is Análisis de Resiliencia de Infraestructura (Analysis of Infrastructure Resilience — ARI) for risk prevention.

**PRRD fostered a culture
resilience and prevention,** besides
strengthening local actors in the
face of natural disasters in 220
municipalities of the country.



Team of Swiss experts and Bolivian civil defence staff. Rapid response to fires in the Amazon region in Santa Cruz. Photo: Swiss Humanitarian Aid Programme.

Resilience, a municipal policy

Being resilient is the capacity to face adversities, whether they are climate related or others, but it is an ability that not many people or institutions have; this is why SDC is firm regarding its development.

Programa Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres (PRRD) executed 14 resilient infrastructure projects in places like Totorá (Cochabamba) and Culpina (Chuquisaca) and works resistant to disaster threats (defensive structures, gabions, reforestation in water retention locations, etc.).

An important milestone was the inclusion of the Risk Management Units (Unidades de Gestión de Riesgos, UGR) in national legislation.

They are in charge of realizing the risk analysis in the municipalities, of preparing risk maps, and of safeguarding proper management of public investment. In 2023, 315 of these units were established, representing coverage of 92% of all the country's municipalities.

“The fact that there is legislation obligating the municipalities to take into account disaster risk reduction through UGRs is forcing them to consider the challenge. This is even more important now that we have catastrophic events every year, and they're exacerbated by climate change,” states Villavicencio.

Humanitarian aid

Although in recent years there were noteworthy efforts of several public institutions for having more resilient infrastructure, there continue to be adverse situations that affect several Bolivian populations. This increases the need for emergency and contingency plans, and for proper attention to adverse events, for strengthening national capacities.

The Swiss Humanitarian Aid Programme, which operates in several countries, and the Group for Rapid Intervention

(Grupo de Intervención y Apoyo Rápido — GIAR) provide support in situations of landslides, floods and fires.

The programme focuses its activities on strengthening national capacities for properly dealing with natural disasters.

In fact, Switzerland will continue supporting Bolivia in humanitarian aid and the global programmes on climate change and water.

Knowledge and resilience

Proyecto de Investigación Aplicada para la Adaptación al Cambio Climático (Applied Research for Adaptation to Climate Change Project — PIAACC) fosters applied scientific research from a perspective of interaction between several disciplines. Its actions are in the spheres of comprehensive water management, territorial and biodiversity management, food security, and risk reduction, among the most important ones.

PIAACC's support benefitted up to 2,500,000 inhabitants of zones vulnerable to climate change who directly or indirectly improved their degree of knowledge and resilience relating to the life systems of the Andean region of the country.



*Teófilo García at his crops.
Photo: Paul Andía.*

The “water plantation” gives Teófilo hope

Testimonial

“Here I have enough to live on,” says Don Teófilo García Carballo while looking proudly at the work he did on his crops. Reforestation of his land, “planting wells” and the increase in his crops’ yield give him a peace of mind that few farmers enjoy.

A gate made of tree trunks and wire is the entrance to the land that Don Teófilo has worked on for two decades; it was reforested over 10 years ago with pine seedlings. His land has now become a paradise on earth that is his reality.

A place full of vegetation and plenty of peace is the first thing visitors find when they reach Viscachani, part of the community of Escalera, Villa Serrano, in the Department of Chuquisaca.

On Don Teófilo’s land one feels fresh air thanks to the reforestation done. Presently there are at least 2,000 pine trees welcoming one to the land, and at the back site is one of the water sources that is fed by this resource thanks Don Teófilo’s efforts supported by the project.

This reforestation work was done with the support of SDC in Bolivia. Since the 1990s, SDC has fostered this kind of work in the valleys of Chuquisaca, through the PLAFOR project.

In a rustic but entirely functional way, Don Teófilo channelled the water springs to his land, thus obtaining a benefit of almost 100% in recovery of the water generated in the area.

Don Teófilo explained that prior to SDC’s intervention there was drought in the area, and he was not aware of how to take advantage of his land’s resources. Thanks to the technique learned in the project’s training sessions, he now has a small dam measuring 10 cubic metres that helps his crops’ irrigation systems, and in some cases provides water to community neighbours.

He concludes saying, “I had this vision many years ago: to have an irrigation system, but I wasn’t able to fulfil the dream because of drought and lack of knowledge. Now we have water year-round.”



Technician installing an air quality metering station. Photo: Proyecto Aire Limpio.

Reducing urban environmental pollution

In the past 30 years, city dwellers have felt environmental pollution more strongly. Because of this, from 2003 to 2017, SDC fostered Proyecto Aire Limpio (Clean Air Project), covering seven departments of the country. In this initiative, efforts concentrated on improving air quality in the most populated cities, through a monitoring network. Besides this, models were applied for sustainable municipal management of wastewater treatment services and solid urban waste.

2003

Proyecto Aire Limpio (Clean Air Project) is born. The initiative has the aim of reducing contaminating gas emissions caused by the motor vehicle fleet. It has coverage in Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, La Paz, El Alto, Oruro, Potosí, Sucre, Tarija, Trinidad, Tiquipaya, Sacaba, and Quillacollo.

2004

The network called Red MoniCA Bolivia is established. The cities of La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz obtain air quality monitoring networks.

2006

A new line of action is implemented: improvement of urban mobility in the municipalities of Tarija, Cochabamba and La Paz. **Companies such as La Paz Bus PumaKatari and Mi Teleférico are being advised and a pedestrian and cyclist friendly infrastructure is being promoted.**

2014

The Gestión Ambiental Municipal (GAM) project begins and SDC incorporates the matter of wastewater treatment and the management of solid waste into its work agenda.

The blue of the sky in the City of Cochabamba is difficult to see, and though visitors may think it is cloudy, soon they realize that it is actually smoggy. Ten years of an exponential increase in contaminant particles made Cochabamba one of the cities with the best air monitoring, because of the need to control it.

Red de Monitoreo de la Calidad del Aire (Air Quality Monitoring Network — Red MoniCA) has information on all air particles in the Municipality of Cochabamba. The causes of the smog are diverse, from accelerated winds resulting from climate change, to growth of the vehicle fleet.

Bolivia has legislation for safeguarding air quality (in the Law of the Environment), and Red MoniCA is one of the entities that has progressed the most in monitoring processes. Thanks to the data obtained, it is known that children, older persons, pregnant women and people with respiratory and cardiovascular infections are those most affected.

From 2003 to 2017, Swisscontact took on the SDC's mandate and successfully executed the Aire Limpio (Clean

Air) project, which concentrated efforts for improving air quality in the most populated cities of the country.

For executing this project, sectors of vulnerable groups were prioritized, seeking to reduce contaminant gas emissions and greenhouse gases released by the motor vehicle fleet, and at the same time improving the quality and efficiency of public transportation.

One of the Aire Limpio project's most important contributions was the implementation of Red MoniCA, through which air quality metering stations were installed both in department capitals and intermediate cities of the nine departments.

Sandra Nisttahusz of Swisscontact mentions that the contribution of the Aire Limpio project — that began in Cochabamba and was then replicated in the department capitals and some intermediate cities — was to prepare annual reports with data on air quality to find out what people breathe in in the urban centres.

Besides, the project contributed to consolidating the National Air Quality Management Programme of the Ministry of the Environment and Water.



Promoting sustainable urban mobility. Photo: Proyecto Aire Limpio.



Potosí, Bolivia. Photo: Programa Cambio Climático.

Key achievements of the Aire Limpio project

- It was observed that CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions went down by 370,000 tons, a major achievement of the 13 years of project.
- Four Vehicle Technical Inspection centres were implemented in four cities of Bolivia and another two are being built.
- Six municipalities have municipal laws on urban mobility.
- Four municipalities created Urban Mobility Secretariats following the implementation of Red MoniCA.
- Twelve municipal air quality monitoring networks (Red MoniCA) were implemented and strengthened with equipment, training and advising.
- Laboratorio Nacional de Referencia de Calidad del Aire (National Air Quality Reference Laboratory — LNRCA) was created at Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA) of La Paz.
- Nine municipal transportation programmes were prepared.

Municipal environmental management

In 2014, SDC initiated the Gestión Ambiental Municipal (Municipal Environmental Management — GAM) project with the aim of reducing environmental pollution in small and intermediate cities and Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation took on its execution. This initiative faced environmental challenges by means of consolidating sustainable management models for wastewater treatment services and solid waste management in urban municipalities.

The Gestión Ambiental Municipal project responded to the need for improving solid waste management and wastewater treatment in small and intermediate cities of the Chaco region of Chuquisaca and Tarija, the Upper Valley of Cochabamba, Lake Titicaca in La Paz, and the Chichas regions of Potosí. A sustainability strategy was employed in six spheres: technical, environmental, social, economic, institutional and knowledge/learning.

GAM's actions were aligned with the public water, basic sanitation and solid waste management policy of the Ministry of the Environment and Water (MMAyA). Its aim was to reduce environmental pollution, which puts the health of the population at risk and exacerbates the negative effects of climate change.

Only four years after its execution, in 2018, significant results were already visible. For example, in 18 of the municipalities where work was done, there was a significant reduction cases of acute diarrhoea in children under five, of 35%.

Another example is that at the beginning of the project (2014), more than 90% of solid waste was deposited in open-pit dumps, often in riverbeds or close to them, thus generating considerable environment risks. This was reduced significantly by 2023, with over 40% of solid waste deposited in sanitary landfills.

Urban mobility

•••► This line of action of the Aire Limpio project focused on **improving infrastructure in favour of pedestrians and cyclists** in the cities of La Paz, Cochabamba and Tarija. ◀•••



Women collectors in Sucre working at their collection centre. Photo: Proyecto Gestión Ambiental Municipal.



Gertrudis Plata.
Photo: Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

Gertrudis Plata, the recycling entrepreneur

Testimonial

Gertrudis Plata Olivera lives in the El Chañar neighbourhood, in Villa Montes, Tarija. From there, she goes about the streets of her town daily, picking up plastic and glass bottles, as well as cans. She was born in 1971 in the community of Bartolo, in Monteagudo, Chuquisaca, and learned that with creativity and effort getting ahead was possible, together with her four children. In 2000 she decided to move to Villa Montes in hope of better days.

Seeing garbage piled up in the streets was a daily occurrence. Gertrudis assembled a group of collector women, all trained in recycling, and improved their knowledge and sought learning on topics of environmental education in her region.

Gertrudis got training through the Gestión Ambiental Municipal (GAM) project, funded by SDC, which was implemented in the small and intermediate cities of the Chaco region of Chuquisaca and Tarija, the Upper Valley of Cochabamba, Lake Titicaca in La Paz, and the Chichas regions of Potosí.

The women go out to the streets daily at dawn and walk for four to five hours collecting waste. This work is done through the association called Asociación de Recolectoras “Las Emprendedoras” (“The Entrepreneurs” Collector Women’s Association), whose members not only contribute to their household economies, but also strengthen environmental education in Villa Montes.

Bundles that provide income

The work of collecting and separating waste is arduous, and until its sale is settled, the task is not completed. Prior to the sale, after selecting the waste, the women package it, making bundles to be sent by truck to their final destination.

A waste bundle weighs 45 to 46 kg. The women, notwithstanding the physical effort this requires, personally load onto trucks the waste to be transported to the City of Santa Cruz.

The transportation contract and everything related to it is paid for by the association members.

The effort is enormous and the pay is not always adequate; however, Gertrudis and the other entrepreneur women obtain satisfaction from their occupation. Thanks to this type of work and other actions fostered by GAM, 147,000 people in the cities in which this project was executed live in less contaminated environments.



Local ancestral knowledge exchange with community members.
Photo: Proyecto Biocultura.

Recovering local knowledge and learning from it for development

Since the 1990s, SDC has promoted sustainable development of natural resources based on local knowledge and the indigenous culture. This work had the aim of improving the quality of life of the most disadvantaged populations in rural areas based on ecological management supported by forms of collective action. For this, the Biocultura (Bio-culture) project recovered several elements of traditional knowledge and activities for the purpose of replicating them and fostering communities in regaining their ownership.

Local knowledge and development

1992

The Suka Kollus (PROSUKO) programme is born, aiming to recover ancestral agricultural practices on the shores of Lake Titicaca. The initiative works in partnership with Intercooperation (presently Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation), with the Bi-national Authority of Lake Titicaca and with Unión de Asociaciones de Productores del Altiplano (Altiplano Union of Associations of Producers).

1995

PROSUKO concentrates on **research and validation of the suka kollos system, an irrigation method** that drains excess water and waters production in plant beds in the Altiplano (High Plateau), for use by the stakeholders on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

2009

Implementation of the Biocultura (Bio-culture) project begins, focussing on adapting Andean ecosystems in 27 municipalities of La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, and Tarija.

While looking over her crop, Elizabeth Veizaga says that before, tarwi (a superfood with one of the highest protein values of any leguminous plant or pulse) was only produced on the fringes of potato plantations. Now she has extensions of land with this vegetable because it is a hope for better days for her family, who live in the community of Toncoli, in the Municipality of Colomi, Cochabamba.

Elizabeth is head of a women farmer association named Asociación Mujeres Productoras Agropecuarias Primera Toncoli, which began with 30 women who cultivated potatoes, ocas, broad beans, clovers, and tarwi.

The members multiplied their production of broad beans and tarwi after receiving support from the Biocultura project, formerly executed by ProRural (Asociación Boliviana para el Desarrollo Rural — Bolivian Association for Rural Development) and funded by SDC.

The leader says proudly that the centre of agrobiodiversity of the country is Colomi. There the women are the ones who manage and give new worth to what they produce; this is why they learned to prepare tarwi-based food. In the past, the nutritional value of this vegetable was not appreciated. Normally the product was consumed only boiled, like cornflour.

With support of the Biocultura project, the women presented their products at fairs and other events, where they also showed how to cook with tarwi.

Ancestral knowledge was incorporated into a recipe book that includes how to prepare vegan meatballs, cheeses, filled potatoes or empanadas, breads, buñuelos [fried pastries], and api [hot, thick corn drink].

“It’s nice to peel the sweet potatoes, prepare mush from them and see my kids munch it at breakfast,” says Elizabeth.

The learning was replicated in other municipalities, such as Villazón, in Potosí, where they taught women how to produce tarwi and the different ways of preparing it.



Exchange of knowledge between women, Potosí. Photo: Proyecto Biocultura.

2012

The Framework Law of Mother Earth and Comprehensive Development for Living Well was passed. This law deals with preservation of the environment, and safeguards the continuity of the regeneration capacity of the environmental components and its habitats. Biocultura contributed to preparing the bill of law.

2015

Biocultura expands its perspective and focuses more on climate resilience and comprehensive development of rural communities that it works with that are vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

2016

Biocultura contributes to the incorporation of Life Systems (“Sistemas de vida”) as a main subject of the Territorial Comprehensive Development Plans (PTDI) of the municipalities, established in Law No. 777 of the Comprehensive Planning System of the State (SPIE).

2022

The Biocultura project supports comprehensive management for adaptation to climate change, in close coordination with the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth (Autoridad Plurinacional de la Madre Tierra – APMT).

Local knowledge and its potential

Biocultura is a project that came into existence 14 years ago in response to a specific context: the constitution of the Plurinational State, which established close dialogue between the philosophy of “Vivir Bien” (“Living Well”),

the Andean concept of Mother Earth (“Madre Tierra”), climate resilience and the comprehensive development of rural communities in conditions of vulnerability.

• • • ► Biocultura intervened in **400 communities and 27 municipalities of six departments**, and worked directly with two department governments. ◀ • • •

“Vivir Bien” — Living Well

“Living Well” or “Proper Living” is life in fullness. In the Andean cultures it means knowing how to live in harmony and balance, in agreement with the cycles of Mother Earth, the cosmos, life, and history, in equilibrium with all forms of existence. And this is precisely the path and the horizon of communities, implying to firstly to know how to live and then to coexist. Living Well is not possible if others are doing badly or if Mother Earth, i.e., nature is being harmed. Living Well means understanding that the deterioration of a species harms the whole.

The basis of this project was the agroecological perspective and ecological management of natural resources, through social collective action. This dialogue was reflected in seeking to conserve biodiversity through revaluing traditional practices and products. An additional goal was to achieve improvements in the local management of natural resources by increasing production, while ensuring food security for the different populations.

“It’s a comprehensive concept, and this is what made the project perform interventions in several territories of the country, with a lot of work done with the municipalities and with a perspective of achieving changes in behaviour,” explained José Luis Pereira, Officer of SDC’s Economic Development and Climate Change Programme.

In its first phase (2010-2014), Biocultura focused on the conservation of Andean ecosystems through the implementation of comprehensive biocultural models called endogenous biocultural systems. These systems are the combination of ancestral wisdom, practices, strategies, and visions of the indigenous farmer communities, which allow them to interact with biodiversity; that is, Mother Earth or nature as a whole.

The programme brought together the populations with the department governments through an approach centred on the economy and the conservation of natural resources.

In the same manner the programme also contributed towards the formulation of the Framework Law of Mother Earth and Comprehensive Development for Living Well and to the creation of the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth (APMT). Furthermore, work was done on the concept of Life Systems as a comprehensive and systemic model for territorial planning in times of climate change.

In the second and in the third phase (2015-2023), Biocultura focused on managing climate change, particularly based on the concept of climate resilience and the comprehensive development of rural communities vulnerable in the face of the negative effects of climate change.

The project also promoted the application of Life Systems Management in the Comprehensive Territorial Development Plans (PTDI) of the municipalities, which were established in Law No. 777 of the Comprehensive Planning System of the State (SPIE). A climate proofing tool based on SDC's CEDRIG is used to evaluate future climate risks in the PTDIs and to adequately adapt the plans.

As a result, the PTDIs translated into investments for irrigation, water harvesting, support for the productive sector, and generating skills, among others, and not simply in infrastructure, as was the case in the past.



Suka kollus, a millennial technique for soil and water management. Photo: PROSUCO.

Traditional knowledge

SDC's commitment in Bolivia to the revaluation of local knowledge is not a recent development. In 1994, through the Interinstitutional Suka Kollus Programme, traditional knowledge was once again appreciated in terms of agriculture. For this, use of the *suka kollus* — a millennial technique for managing soil and water — was rediscovered. This Andean agricultural system, developed by the Tiwanakota culture, consists of interspersing crop platforms with channels through which the water circulated.

The project improved the wellbeing of farmer families in the Altiplano (High Plateau) region bordering on

Lake Titicaca by means of intensifying and diversifying agricultural production. The work was done by revaluing this pre-Hispanic technology, which is adequate for the climate and geographic demands of the Bolivian Altiplano.

This proposal was carried out in the northern Altiplano of the Department of La Paz, in the area around Lake Titicaca, which includes the Provinces of Omasuyos, Los Andes and Ingavi, with the opportunity of including others such as Manco Kapac and Camacho. In the same way, beginning in the 2001 agricultural season, the proposal was expanded to communities of the Province of Aroma.

• • • ► The Interinstitutional *Suka Kollus* Programme (**PROSUKO**) improved **the inclusion of farmers in the local value chains** and in the urban markets of La Paz and El Alto. ◀ • • •

I am *Ajayu*. I am the Soul



Group of *Ajayu* volunteer firefighters mitigating a fire. Photo: Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (DAC).

Testimonial

“I am an *Ajayu*”, she says, and is proud to be one. She has acted in the most serious fires of Bolivia, in the Chiquitania region of Santa Cruz in 2019, in the Madidi National Park in 2020 (during the pandemic), in the fire at Asunta in the Yungas region of La Paz in this year (2023), and in other smaller fires.

Her name is Kelly Tejeda and she is the Commander of the *Ajayu* volunteer firefighters. She says, “I will probably stay until we have a more consolidated group with experience. It will be my gift to Bolivian society, young people concerned for the wellbeing of others and for the environment.”

She adds that one of the major shortcomings of the different volunteer groups is the lack of resources; almost no one has them, except a few that are supported by the State. The rest appeal to the solidarity of the citizens in order to advance in missions, because the support of State institutions is almost never efficient or rarely arrives with the immediacy required in an emergency; on the contrary, it is a bureaucratic and constant problem due to

lack of organization and knowledge. Fortunately, there is SDC, which has supported them a lot.

The matter of fires in recent years is dramatic because, says Kelly, “You can be trained technically, be extremely fit and have broad knowledge of all the necessary fields; weariness can be dealt with because you’re physically prepared; hunger isn’t present in missions; thirst can be quenched with water from a source; and wounds heal; but nothing can prepare you for losing a friend, a partner. You can even take on the loss of your own life, because you know the risks of every mission, but losing a partner in a mission is something nobody thinks of or understands the way those of us who went through it do. You have to keep calm, and have the strength and fortitude for facing whatever may come, and especially for continuing the work to complete the mission when a loss happens. This is the hardest and most painful thing that any volunteer faces. If the population and the governments acted responsibly, we would not be risking the lives of volunteer firefighters in so many fires”.

Presently there are more than 20 male and female volunteers with experience in forest fires who are trained in other fields needed for coherent work adequate for each mission. The decision was made to also train children and youth of schools, so that once they graduate, they can join the ranks of operational volunteers.

Kelly adds, “These last focus groups are providing incredible results. We try to have an effect on the awareness of children, talking to them about the responsibility of cohabitating in an environment where we have to learn to respect all living creatures of the planet and to protect our nature. These children are not many, but I’m sure that they will be the seeds of what will come in the future and will be an example to be followed, because we are in a society where our children are fascinated by communication technology.

I have always considered that volunteers are ordinary people that do extraordinary things for their society, and the Ajayu Volunteer Firefighters Group are no exception. But there’s something that makes us different from other volunteer groups: we’re environmentalists by excellence.

Protecting our environment and the animal and plant species that live in it is essential for us, because we understand the importance of maintaining a balance of coexistence in a planet where humans are the ones primarily responsible for maintaining this equilibrium. Our society has to understand that the important thing is not having more volunteer firefighters, but instead for society to be educated and aware of the effects of their actions, and in the government’s case, of their lack of actions. Humanity has not completely understood that without water there is no life, and that water is generated by maintaining the environment balanced. The more we deplete, the less chances we have of surviving as human beings. Water is a vital element that is part of the circle of life.

There have been dramatic moments and happy moments. There’s nothing like watching the sunset and then seeing the stars in the sky after finishing a mission. And there’s nothing worse than seeing the fire progress and feeling the helplessness of not being able to do much. Even so, we the Ajayu are still here,” concludes Kelly.



Ajayu Volunteer Firefighters Group. Photo: Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (DAC).



*Women weavers of Yunchará.
Photo: Paul Andía.*

Women of Yunchará shine with camelid wool textiles

(The Biocultura project and climate change)

Testimonial

María Delgado is a Counsellor of the Municipality of Yunchará, Tarija, and she raises camelids. She emphasizes that since a decade ago, women not only have a greater presence in the field of producing textiles, but also the improvements in the quality of the products they sell in the capital of Tarija are evident, and this is the result of their training.

“Years ago, the entire process of making clothing articles from llama, alpaca and sheep wool was work done only by men. The women were cast aside, because the men thought we weren’t capable of making good textiles,” stresses María.

Both men and women perform the process of artisanal production of wool and the fabrication of high-quality clothing articles in two days. The process begins with shearing llamas, alpacas and sheep. Then the material is washed, and finally, the wool is selected. When the raw material is ready, it is spun and dyed with natural plants. Then they begin to weave the clothing articles.

Among the most admired pieces of their textile production are scarves, shawls, ponchos, ruanas, and blankets made of llama, alpaca and sheep wool. Sixty or more women in the group produce the articles, and the income they obtain from sales is distributed according to a code that every woman has been assigned.

They now have more time

Yunchará is a municipality located in the high part of Tarija. The tranquil landscape and the warmth of its people stand in contrast to the cold and the wind that blows on the plain. Sixteen years ago, this community started raising camelids, and they are now one of the main sources of income for its inhabitants.

Antenor Farfán is one of the active members of the community of Yunchará; he acknowledges that thanks to camelid production, the families have more time to spend together and also have the chance to be self-sustainable in terms of food.

“We used to have to be tending to the sheep; we couldn’t neglect them. Now we leave the llamas in the field and they come back without us paying attention to them,” explains Antenor.

The work done by the organization called Protección del Medio Ambiente Tarija (Tarija Environment Protection — PROMETA) within the framework of SDC’s Biocultura project, through its camelid programme, boosted an increase in the camelid population through concrete actions, such as improvements in the genetic quality of the llama herds, benefitting 600 families from 28 communities.

Leaving footprints in Preservation and Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Chronology of flagship projects

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1977	2000	FOREST-PROFOR	Proyecto Repoblamiento Forestal Cochabamba Cochabamba Forestry Reforestation Project
1988	2000	PLAFOR	Programa Agroforestal de Chuquisaca Chuquisaca Agroforestry Programme
1991	2008	PROMIC	Programa Manejo Intergral de Cuencas Comprehensive Watershed Management Programme
1992	2005	PROBONA	Programa de Bosques Nativos Andinos Andean Native Forests Programme
1993	2003	BASFOR-FOSEFOR	Proyecto Centro de Semillas Forestales Forestry Seeds Centre Project
1994	2000	MEDMIN	Manejo Integrado del Medio Ambiente en la Pequeña Minería Comprehensive Environmental Management of Small Mining
1999	2007	ATICA	Programa Agua Tierra Campesina Farmer Water Land Programme
2003	2017	AIRE LIMPIO	Aire Limpio Clean Air
2005	2018	PRRD	Proyecto Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres Disaster Risk Reduction Project
2006	2010	CONCERTAR	Programa de Gobernabilidad para el Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible Governability for Sustainable Territorial Development Programme
2010	2015	GESTOR	Gestión de Recursos Naturales y Cambio Climático Natural Resources Management and Climate Change
2010	2023	BIOCULTURA	Biocultura Bio-culture
2014	2022	GIA	Proyecto de Gestión Integral del Agua Comprehensive Water Management Project
2014	2023	GAM	Proyecto Gestión Ambiental Municipal Municipal Environmental Management Project
2014	2023	PIAACC	Proyecto de Investigación Aplicada en Adaptación al Cambio Climático Applied Research for Adaptation to Climate Change Project
2017	2025	BGI (Better Gold Initiative)	Iniciativa Oro Responsable Better Gold Initiative

Some figures

- **Clean air**

370,000 tons of CO₂ emissions were reduced. **12** Bolivian cities designed sustainable urban mobility plans, which are being implemented and have systems for measuring air quality.

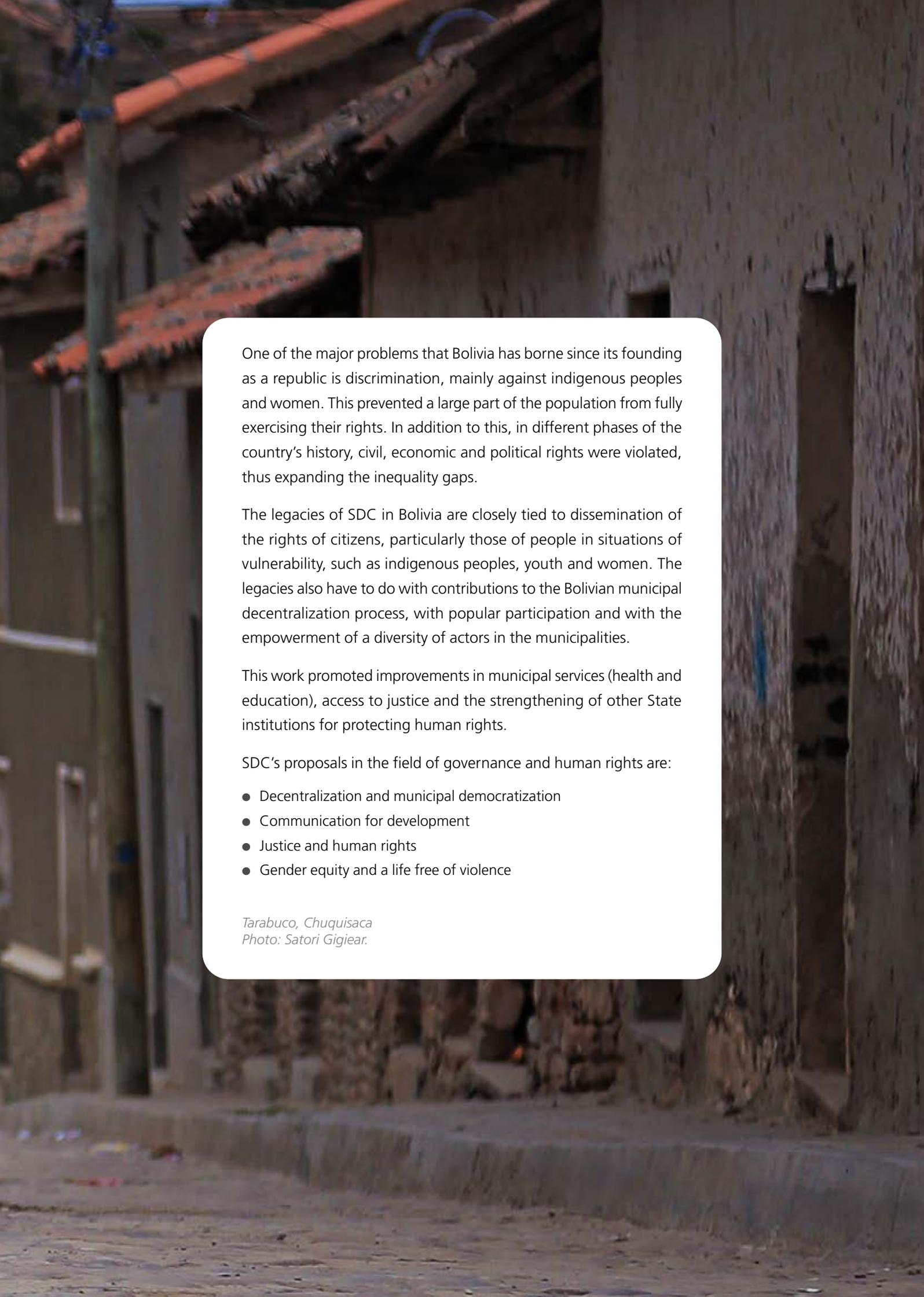
- **Disaster Risk Reduction (PRRD)** **105** rural municipalities have Risk Management Units and Emergency Operations Centres thanks to the support of the PRRD.

- **Bio-culture**

Over **17,000** families supported by the project over three phases by 2023 in 27 municipalities.



Governance and Human Rights



One of the major problems that Bolivia has borne since its founding as a republic is discrimination, mainly against indigenous peoples and women. This prevented a large part of the population from fully exercising their rights. In addition to this, in different phases of the country's history, civil, economic and political rights were violated, thus expanding the inequality gaps.

The legacies of SDC in Bolivia are closely tied to dissemination of the rights of citizens, particularly those of people in situations of vulnerability, such as indigenous peoples, youth and women. The legacies also have to do with contributions to the Bolivian municipal decentralization process, with popular participation and with the empowerment of a diversity of actors in the municipalities.

This work promoted improvements in municipal services (health and education), access to justice and the strengthening of other State institutions for protecting human rights.

SDC's proposals in the field of governance and human rights are:

- Decentralization and municipal democratization
- Communication for development
- Justice and human rights
- Gender equity and a life free of violence

Tarabuco, Chuquisaca
Photo: Satori Gigiear.



Training on decentralization. Photo: Governance Programme.

Decentralization, a bid to strengthen democracy

The road towards decentralization in Bolivia has been long and continuous. It implied not only changes in the structure of the State, but also in the empowerment of the various sectors of society so that they participate in public policies. In 1984, during the presidential mandate of Hernán Siles Zuazo, the National Decentralization Commission was created, seeking to appease civic pressure for passing a law. As a result, from 1984 to 2016 SDC systematically supported the decentralization and municipal democratization process.

The application of the new Popular Participation Law in the country in 1994 fostered the expansion of the powers and resources in favour of municipal governments, and the transfer of physical infrastructure in education, health, sports, regional roads, and micro-irrigation, with the obligation to administrate, maintain and renew it. In this way, a new form of understanding democracy was established. However, this change was not easy to assimilate.

For example, some municipal authorities of Comarapa, a municipality in Santa Cruz, refused to provide municipal information to smallholder farmer and indigenous leaders. These leaders wanted to become involved in the process of informing their communities on the municipal actions. Given the refusal, the citizens ignored what activities and programmes were included in the Annual Operating Plan (POA), and what the status of execution of works was, among other municipal issues.

1984

Contributions to the Bolivian decentralization and municipal democratization process begins. Proyecto de Apoyo a la Planificación Regional (Regional Planning Support Project — PLAREG) is born, through an agreement with Corporación al Desarrollo de Chuquisaca (CORDECH).

1985

SDC becomes aligned with the Economic Management Strengthening Operations (EMSO-Descentralización) project, which receives support from the World Bank. A diagnosis of all the decentralized and deconcentrated units of Bolivia is done.

1994

The Popular Participation Law (LPP) is passed, constituting the first national legislation on decentralization. The experiences of PLAREG and EMSO were fundamental for preparing this legislation. Technical and financial support was also provided.

Governance and human rights

The implementation of Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (Municipal Democracy Support Programme — PADEM), financed by SDC in Bolivia, sought to overcome the problem of a lack of information.

PADEM began providing workshops and training local promoters, who received training through illustrated infographics that presented the actions of the municipality in their communities. This made the residents become transformation agents, as is told in the text titled “Ayer aprendimos, hoy enseñamos” (“Yesterday We Learned, Today We Teach”).

The work of the promoters meant a valuable contribution to understanding and building municipal management. Also relevant was the strengthening of decentralization,

a process the country went through since the passing of the Popular Participation Law.

The Popular Participation Law provided a certain degree of autonomy in public management to urban and rural municipalities, and it took into account indigenous social organizations, which for the first time in Bolivian history were legally recognized. In brief, the participation of all sectors was important for executing this law.

By means of this legislation, Bolivia sought to take the path towards a fairer and better administrated distribution of resources, incorporating indigenous, farmer and urban communities in the legal, political and economic life of the municipalities with the aim of improving the quality of life of the country’s inhabitants.

The municipal promoters contributed towards the understanding and construction of the municipal sphere and towards **strengthening of decentralization.**

1996

Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (Municipal Democracy Support Programme — PADEM) is implemented to promote popular participation and the empowerment of sectors in situations of vulnerability. The initiative is executed by SDC in partnership with Swiss Workers’ Assistance (SAH).

2005

PADEM finances Programa de Promoción de Cultura Ciudadana (Citizen Culture Promotion Programme — PCC) for working on the construction of citizenry based on co-responsibility of society and the State at the local level.

2013

PADEM supports Programa Mejora de Servicios (Services Improvement Programme — PMS). Health, education and protection of women in situations of violence are connected to issues of decentralization, governance and development.

DAC: In Macharetí the Municipal Beekeeping Law is now a reality

Testimonial

The Municipality of Macharetí has a “Municipal Law for raising, managing, conserving, and protecting bees with stingers (*Apis mellifera*) and native stingless bees (*Meliponini*)”, which strengthens a sustainable approach for beekeeping.

The legislation values native bee species as an indicator of wellbeing of the territory and of wildlife (Art. 7), proposes measures for their conservation, how to identify the bees, recover degraded lands, protect herbaceous species, and encourage an increase in hives in mobile units and breeding chambers (Art. 15), among other measures.

Additionally, the law states that the Municipal Government of Macharetí, in coordination with the national and departmental authorities that have the necessary powers reinforce its control mechanisms for the smuggling of honey and other bee products (Art. 20), and the law fosters best practices for beekeeping (Art. 26). The law also considers the possibility of developing beekeeping in a tourism perspective (Art. 27).

“It’s necessary to create a work axis, in which of all the actions of the actors in the value chain and of public and private entities with operational influence on the beekeeping sector come together, in order to coordinate and achieve more effectiveness in the implementation of actions and strategies,” says Agustín Quispe, Chairman of the Asociación de Apicultores de Macharetí (Macharetí Beekeepers Association — AAPIMMACH).

Municipal Law No. 15 was advanced by the project titled “Mercados y alianza por la apicultura sostenible en el Municipio de Macharetí” (“Markets and alliance for sustainable beekeeping in the Municipality of Macharetí”)

of the Instituto para el Desarrollo Rural de Sudamérica (Institute for the Rural Development of South America — IPDRS) in the framework of Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (Support for Dialogue and Collaboration Project — DAC) of SDC in Bolivia, implemented by Solidar Suisse.



Agustín Quispe, Chairman of Asociación de Apicultores de Macharetí.
Photo: Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (DAC).



Members of Asociación de Apicultores de Macharetí. Photo: Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (DAC).

SDC developed and executes the Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (DAC) project, which encourages that civil society organizations — particularly Bolivian NGOs, foundations and networks work together in coordination with different levels of the State, the private sector and academia, in the design and implementation of innovative and effective solutions for key development topics in the country, in the thematic fields of governance, economic development, and climate change and the environment.

The DAC project promotes that the State, civil society, the private sector and academia dispose of the required support to think and work together to propose solutions for key challenges of inclusive and sustainable development, through joining their strengths and knowledge. The project also seeks to propose innovating initiatives based on applied research, and technical evidence analysis, which contribute to solving Bolivia's more recent and older public issues.

The DAC project prioritizes people in situations of poverty and/or vulnerability, hoping to reach at least 40,000 people, of which 50% are expected to be women. The inclusion of youth is a priority.

“As beekeepers of the Municipality of Macharetí, we’ve benefitted from the exchange of experiences with other producers who have more knowledge of the beekeeping sector, and this motivates us to continue moving forward, to become empowered, develop as beekeepers and strengthen our leadership,” says Agustín Quispe.

The DAC project reached all nine departments of the country, with 38 policies, programmes and budgets at the national, department and/or local level on different key development topics promoted by organizations of the State, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

30 NGOs and eight networks of Bolivian NGOs have strengthened their skills at the organizational, financial and operational levels, and in advocacy and research.

The beginnings: PLAREG

For achieving popular participation, the country and a diversity of actors took prior steps towards decentralization. In the mid-1980s, SDC supported the then Ministry of Planning in carrying forward a policy of territorial and technical decentralization with programmes that prioritized regional and microregional development, favouring local rural development. This is how the Apoyo

a la Planificación Regional (PLAREG) project came into being.

PLAREG sought to strengthen the planning units of the departments for them to constitute a framework for departmental, provincial and municipal development adequate for development at the local level.

The foundations of the Law and EMSO

In 1985, SDC in Bolivia joined efforts with the Economic Management Strengthening Operations (EMSO-Descentralización) project, that received support from the World Bank. Through this project, a regional diagnosis of all decentralized and deconcentrated units was done, which later informed the official decentralization proposal in 1990.

The experiences and results obtained both by PLAREG and by EMSO influenced the preparation of the Popular Participation Law. Furthermore, EMSO provided resources for establishing the work team that in the end formulated the bill for the Law.

Empowerment of the actors

Two years after the enactment of the Popular Participation Law — following the initiative of the NGO Swiss Workers' Assistance (SAH), presently called Solidar Suisse, and smallholder and worker organizations —, in 1996 SDC fostered Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (PADEM), which became a reference programme in Bolivia in the construction of citizenry and democracy from the local level.

PADEM was born with the aim of supporting efficiency in municipal management, for improving municipal services and reducing inequality gaps in 200 municipalities. The programme promoted and accompanied the integration of social sectors for a transparent and strengthened municipal management under the premise: If everyone participates, efforts multiply and results are greater.

“With PADEM, we changed their [the leaders'] way of thinking and told them, ‘Instead of fighting amongst yourselves, take advantage of this space that is opening

up, because now you'll have the chance to direct your authorities, you'll have responsibilities and resources'. And that's when this began to make sense to them and the organizations embraced the decentralization process,” explained the Coordinator of Solidar Suisse Bolivia, Martín Pérez.

With the boost provided by the programme, the municipalities were made visible in spaces allowing the democratization of society and the State, offering both favourable conditions for fighting poverty and for the identification of strategic starting points to promote processes of sustainable and equitable development.

Renata Hofmann, former coordinator of Swiss Labour Assistance, which later became Solidar Suisse, highlighted that PADEM's contribution was to achieve citizen participation and to position the theme as essential for democracy.



Weaver of Yunchará.
Photo: Paul Andía.

Clementina Flores and her work as a leader in the countryside

Testimonial

Clementina Flores smiles triumphantly while her words have a strong effect on her colleagues, “If we women support each other, we can go very far.”

She is one of the leaders of Chaquí, a municipality in Potosí that participated in different training projects with PADEM. She has stood out for her oratory skills at every meeting held with other rural municipal women leaders.

From where these women gather, the Chaquí Mayu, Chaquí and Tambo rivers are visible; they are affluents

that Clementina knows well, because water is essential for household tasks.

Chaquí has a population of 9,910, of which more than half are women. “As a leader I’ve seen how our people live, how they live in poverty,” says Clementina from her experience. Their process of training has not been easy, but through different activities, such as sociodramas, painting murals, and spaces of reflection, this leader arrived at her own conclusions regarding the participation of women in politics.

The contribution of women

Dissemination of information with a gender approach was a determining factor for Clementina and other leaders, as it allowed them to have an active role in their communities, particularly in critical topics in which they did not formerly participate.

“In the beginning the overseeing committees were in radical opposition to the mayors. This threatened the development of the municipalities. Luckily things have

changed, partly because women challenged the leaders who resisted reaching agreements,” explains one of the PADEM facilitators regarding the men holding power and their view of women in terms of leadership tasks in their communities and municipalities. The actions led the men to help more with household tasks, and the women to participate more in political decisions. It is expected that through this development the levels of violence and machismo will continue to decrease.



Workshop with local communicators. Photo: Governance Programme.

From information to action, communication as a key to development

PADEM went beyond employing communication simply as information; it also built and promoted discussion and collective participation spaces to influence public policies in rural and urban municipalities. This task began in 2005. Many of the projects initially funded by PADEM continue to date.

Communication for development

1996

PADEM resorts to a communication model for development. It employs booklets and bulletins for informing directly; additionally, it promotes and realizes radio programmes.

2005

The telephone and municipal radio consulting practice of Doctora Edilicia is born; she is the fictitious person created to respond to the questions of citizens and authorities on municipal management.

2006

PADEM carries out training workshops for communicators and creates networks for improving the communication quality, under the slogan, "without information there is no citizenry, and without citizenry there is no democracy."

2010

PADEM seeks for the media and the communicators themselves to interiorize a work rationale of co-responsibility, to build bridges of dialogue between the municipal governments and the citizens.

“Counsellor Edilicia, I did my duty; I voted in the elections, so I’m fine until the next elections... I’m a good citizen.”

“Dear friend, being a good citizen is voting on election day, yes definitely, but it also implies participating in the spaces of citizen voting where proposals must be made for solving the problems. It means debating on different topics, respecting all expressed opinions, to reach agreements that are suitable for society as a whole.”

“Oh, madam! I was thinking that I had already achieved everything by having my voting certificate!”

This is a fragment of the well-known radio programme of Counsellor Edilicia Barrios, the character of Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (PADEM), who helps solve problems in municipalities over the radio. Her voice became familiar in the country and her advice presently helps to understand

day-to-day situations both in the cities and in the countryside.

This educational programme was born in 2005, through the initiative of journalist Guimer Zambrana, and it was journalist Marlene Berríos Gosálvez who “gave her voice” to the character.

“The radio slots that we did early on had innovative approaches. People specialized in communication made mini dramatizations that had a considerable impact,” tells Renata Hofmann, former Coordinator of Swiss Labour Assistance (SAH), who was one of the promoters of PADEM.

Besides the radio slots, Doctora Edilicia has a website with 42,000 followers and a telephone municipal consulting office with over one million interactions of calls and on-line consultations. Both platforms continue to the present. More information available at:

www.doctoraedilicia.com



Interviewing Marlene Berríos, who “gave her voice” to the emblematic Doctora Edilicia, the lawyer. Photo: PADEM.

Citizenry education through the media

Following the application of the concept “communication for development”, Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (PADEM) promoted several mass communication processes. The program sought to encourage active and co-responsible participation of the local actors through access to information on how to exercise their rights and duties at the municipal level.

“The members of PADEM sought partnerships with thematically competent communication professionals to involve social organizations in the decentralization process; however, not only using communication as a way to distribute information, but rather as a space for discussion, participation and building local democracy,” explained Guimer Zambrana, Communication Coordinator of PADEM.

As a result of the communication proposals, the municipal actors jointly committed to solving their common problems. The local communicators established and

trained networks and partnerships to organize the variety of local stakeholders to take on the co-responsibility for their common wellbeing.

From the outset, the PADEM team generated multiple communicational products: radio slots, slots on information of the municipality, radio theatres, and other resources for the training on local democracy. Besides this, other communication projects were financed that lobbied for matters of importance in the municipalities.

As well through PADEM, a training programme aimed at the local communicators was implemented, for them to become promoters of the dialogue process between the municipal government and the citizenry and help construct bridges.

In summary, the communicational action of PADEM was aimed at forming communicators, but also at informing the citizenry on what happens in their municipalities.



Popular communicators building bridges between municipal governments and the citizenry. Photo: Governance Programme.



Rosmary Ardaya, journalist from Radio Horizonte.

Rosmary Ardaya and her radio advocacy for preventing cancer

Testimonial

Rosmary Ardaya, aged 55, is at the broadcast booth of Radio Horizonte, in the Municipality of Huanuni, in Oruro. From the studio she informs on preventing cancer of the uterine cervix, work she has been doing for many years.

“Women were living with this silent disease and didn’t know it. Every day we met women with cancer that was almost terminal,” recalls Rosmary after finishing the radio programme that she heads.

Given this problem, in 2015 she participated in a contest organized by PADEM that had the communication initiative of

“Healthy Municipality”, in the sphere of the programme called Mejora de Servicios Locales (Local Service Improvement — PMS). The aim of her project, which ended up winning the contest, was to provide information to the female population of Huanuni on the human papillomavirus.

In her programme, Rosmary interviewed medical doctors and specialists to tackle the problem. She also combined interviews with useful information on the prevention and characteristics of this form of cancer that is sexually transmitted. With this support, Rosmary was able to do this work daily and systematically for a whole year.

From the radio to a public policy

In addition to her media work, Rosmary became involved in a network of diverse actors from Huanuni, who were to lobby regarding the issues that the women of her community had to face. Popular communicators, miner housewives and women dedicated to informal commerce, among others, responded to this call and raised awareness in their groups at the grassroots level so that women went to have the necessary health examinations.

The network joined the Nursing Programme of Universidad Técnica de Oruro (UTO) to perform a survey and find out why women did not go to have the Papanicolaou

(papillomavirus) examination done, even though it was free of charge. The results showed that the husbands were opposed to their wives having these examinations done. This reality led to also raising awareness in men, through their workers unions.

Thanks to Rosmary’s work at the radio, it was possible to implement the Municipal Law on “Declaration of the priority and need for prevention and comprehensive attention to uterine cervix cancer in Huanuni”. Given the law, the fight against this disease became a public policy.



Overcrowding at small jail in Montero. Photo: Abdel Padilla.

The long road towards access to justice, and human rights

The Office of Human Rights and EMPODER (Empowerment and Indigenous Peoples) established the basis for helping State entities address the rights of indigenous peoples and generate public policies to be applied. Gradually and systematically, the road was paved for excluded sectors to exercise their rights. In addition, conciliation was prioritized as a conflict resolution mechanism to allow disregarded stakeholders to access justice, to solve conflicts and to promote a culture of peace.

Justice and human rights

1996

Programa de Defensa Pública Rural (Rural Public Defence Programme) is created, offering free legal assistance to residents of rural areas in La Paz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, and Potosí. This work is done with the Ministry of Justice.

1999

Creation of Oficina de DDHH y Pueblos Indígenas (Office of Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples), then called Empoderamiento y Pueblos Indígenas (Empowerment and Indigenous Peoples — EMPODER). The initiative reaches populations that suffer violations of their rights. The institution coordinates with the Ministry of Justice and with indigenous organizations.

2000

EMPODER, together with the Ombudsman Office and the Catholic Church, facilitate an encounter between two ayllus (basic territorial unit of Andean communities): the Laimes and Qaqachacas, whose confrontation ended in deaths. A peace agreement was reached between them.

2006

EMPODER, in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and the Ombudsman Office promotes the eradication of forced labour and labour exploitation.

The Guaraní Indians of the Bolivian Chaco region used to work from six in the morning until nine at night in the haciendas of their “masters”, as they liked to be called. They earned only 15 bolivianos per day; the women were lucky to earn half that amount, and the children were paid nothing. This was during the first years of the 21st century and the Guaraní were still living under conditions of slavery in the Chaco, in three departments.

“We must work every day. Even if we have a stomach ache or fever, we have to do the cooking, even with tears in our eyes, we have to grind [the maize],” tells a woman about the work on the haciendas. This testimonial was complemented by a hacienda owner, who not ashamed at all, said that the Guaraní have no initiative and therefore need to be “commanded on what to do.”

The situation in which these indigenous people lived was reflected in “Quiero ser libre, sin dueño” (“I want to be free, without an owner”), an audiovisual production of the Ombudsman Office and the Ministry of the Presidency which debuted in 2005. The documentary was an initiative of Miriam Campos, who was at the time the person in charge of the Pueblos Indígenas y Empoderamiento (EMPODER) project, which depended on the Ministry of Justice and was financed by SDC in Bolivia.

In 2008, this video was presented at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which meets every year in New York.

The documentary had such a strong impact and was so moving for the audience that the Chairman of the Forum and representatives of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) decided to visit the country. In 2009, the representatives of the two institutions arrived in Alto Parapetí, one of the Guaraní areas of Santa Cruz, where they witnessed what was reported in the video.

Following their visit, the international entities made a series of recommendations to the Bolivian State, which took concrete action to eliminate the conditions of semi-slavery in which the Guaraní lived. The measures included a legislative modification through which the Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria (National Agrarian Reform Institute — INRA) reverted the land of haciendas in which this situation was present, to the State.

“A comprehensive policy was issued by the Ministry of Labour and INRA with several public policies that had a single objective: to eradicate forced labour. A large part of the recognition of the problem was thanks to Swiss contribution,” emphasizes Miriam Campos.



Human rights, a priority

SDC's work on justice and human rights in Bolivia goes back to 1996. In that year, the institution decided to provide economic and technical support for Programa de Defensa Rural Móvil (Mobile Rural Defence Programme), which offered free legal assistance to people unable to hire lawyers. In this way, actions were supported for democratizing Bolivian justice and strengthening its administration in four departments.

EMPODER — which was active from 2005 to 2012 — sought to implement a programme of defence, awareness, dissemination and training on the rights of indigenous peoples. The project also promoted alternative mechanisms for conflict resolution in communities and recognized the value of the traditional justice of native authorities.

The new policies in favour of the Guarani people were one of the milestones that the EMPODER project achieved. The second milestone was pacifying the Laimes and Qaqachacas ayllus (basic territorial unit of highland indigenous communities). The ongoing dispute between these two groups ended up with deaths yearly. The third milestone was combating labour exploitation in the Brazil nut harvest, which was common in the Amazon region of Beni and Pando.

EMPODER was the continuation of Oficina de Derechos Humanos para Pueblos Indígenas, a project fostered by SDC from 1999 to 2005, executed by the Ministry of Justice.



*Indigenous peoples as key groups for SDC's pursuit of empowerment.
Photo: Governance Programme.*



*A still frame of the video titled "Quiero ser libre, sin dueño".
Photo: Governance Programme.*

Work in pursuit of the rights of indigenous peoples from 1999 to 2012

Oficina de Derechos Humanos para Pueblos Indígenas and EMPODER supported issues on the right and access to land, indigenous men and women leader training,

conflict resolution and early warning, attending to cases of human rights violations, and labour conciliation.



Empowered women masons. Photo: EMPODER.

The following are some of the results:

- **171,500** hectares of land were recovered in favour of the Guarani people in over 50 communities of the Bolivian Chaco region.
- **3,017** men and women leaders were trained.
- **24,500** men and women benefitted from the appeasement of the conflicts in five ayllus.

Institutional strengthening

Following the experience with the Ministry of Justice, SDC implemented a joint work strategy with the Bolivian State through the Institutional Capacity Strengthening Programme (Fortalecimiento de Capacidades Institucionales — FORDECAPI) project, in 2009. The project gave continuity to the work done by Oficina de Derechos Humanos para Pueblos Indígenas and EMPODER.

“We are talking about processes upheld in the long-term, not specific actions. Trust between SDC and the organizations, indigenous authorities and [government] authorities was important for generating changes,” emphasizes Campos.

FORDECAPI initially worked with 20 State counterparts on subjects such as the defence and restitution of the fundamental rights of populations in situations of vulnerability, the environment, access to information, and institutional transparency, among others.

In 2013, following an external evaluation, the project concentrated its work on the ministries of Justice and Public Works to promote a culture of peace, in the framework of the Political Constitution of the State.

In the human rights sphere, SDC supported the continuity of the Ombudsman Office and was the leader of the donors supporting the Office for five years. FORDECAPI obtained financing over 18 consecutive years.

“The work with indigenous peoples which lasted over a decade was the most important and highest impact initiative which Switzerland implemented directly, i.e. through an own project unit in the Embassy. Moreover, the support for the Ombudsman Office over almost two decades shows the importance and continuity that Switzerland gives to the defence of human rights,” states Mila Reynolds, National Officer of SDC’s Governance Programme.

Access to justice, a basic right

In many cases, having access to justice in Bolivia is not easy. That’s why, after the experiences of EMPODER and FORDECAPI, in 2013, the Access to Justice Project (Proyecto Acceso a Justicia — PAJ) was born, financed by SDC.

PAJ aimed to make it clear that justice is a fundamental right. Therefore, it promoted free legal assistance to rural populations in situations of vulnerability, with conflict resolution and appeasement, conciliation by judicial and extrajudicial means, and technical and financial strengthening of the Plurinational Service of Public Legal Defence.

Conciliations have on average an annual cost of Bs. 1,800, while trials cost Bs. 13,000.

In terms of time, a conciliation can conclude in 50 days, and an ordinary civil procedure lasts approximately 247 days.



Conciliation: Justice within reach of the people

This project contributed significantly towards improving access to justice through the implementation of the public policy of conciliation, within the framework of the State's justice reforms and the promotion of the citizenry's human rights.

The resolution of the conflict between the Guarani who lived under conditions of slavery and the hacienda owners was neither an easy nor a quick one. Given that the indigenous families had lived side by side with the owners, emotional bonds were present, and it was thus necessary to re-establish the relations, and conciliation was opted for as a mechanism for solving the conflicts.

This and other experiences led SDC in Bolivia to consider Proyecto Acceso a Justicia (PAJ), which among other actions fostered conciliation in court as an alternative for conflict resolution.

"Conciliation is a direct route for access to justice. It's voluntary, quick, low cost, confidential, and effective," explains Paulino Verástegui Palao, lawyer and technical specialist of the SDC's Acceso a Justicia project.

Conciliation allows both parties to win, at a low cost, in a short time, and it provides a good result. The agreements reached are just as binding as judicial sentences; hence, their compliance is obligatory.

In December 2021, the Ministry of the Interior presented the results of the application of conciliation in criminal cases from 2020 to 2021. This free service made possible 5,531 agreements, reducing the procedural burden in the judicial system, and allowing to progress in the restoration of justice for the citizenry. In 2021, a study performed for the Ministry of the Interior determined that while a criminal procedure on average lasts 48 months and costs Bs. 29,000, a conciliation takes on average only four months at a cost of Bs. 2,500.

SDC's support from 2016 to 2021 allowed close to 150,000 people to solve their conflicts by means of conciliation, a direct and peaceful means for accessing justice, through complete or partial agreements, both in court and in extrajudicial spaces.



Conciliation at a judicial office. Photo: Proyecto Acceso a Justicia.

Conciliation, justice that works (2016-2022)

- **157** judicial conciliators work in Bolivia, in both urban and rural areas.
- **23** prosecutors-conciliators oversee the conciliation units of the Ministry of the Interior. 29 psychologists and social workers make up the interdisciplinary teams that provide support for judicial conciliation in family matters.
- **127,234** people benefitted from 63,617 agreements of total and partial conciliation at judicial offices.
- There was a reduction of **7%** in procedural delays in civil matters over the 2017-2018 period resulting from the application of conciliation at judicial offices.

Conciliation at judicial offices represented a leap forward towards restorative justice. For that reason, in its second phase, PAJ also promoted this mechanism in the extrajudicial space, through conciliation centres.

The option of allowing people to go directly to these centres, which arose in 2016, was made possible because one year earlier Law No. 708 of Conciliation and Arbitrage was enacted. This legislation regulates extrajudicial conciliation and designates the Ministry of Justice as the guiding body, with the obligation, among others, to authorize the operation of conciliation and arbitrage centres, which in 2022 were 54 in number.

Miriam Campos of Proyecto Acceso a Justicia and Fátima Luna of Fundación UNIR Bolivia — which works in extrajudicial conciliation with civil society and conciliation between neighbours — explained that through this form of solving matters, those involved regain control of managing their own conflicts, and the conciliator's participation is minimal.



The two parties of a conflict reach an agreement. Photo: UNIR Bolivia.

SIJPLU: from recovering a gas cylinder for cooking to settling millionaire contracts

Testimonial

The municipal offices of the Plurinational Comprehensive Justice Services (SIJPLU) receive at least 13 requests for conflict resolutions daily. People go to this institution without having to go through judicial instances and opt for extrajudicial conciliation.

The cases dealt with in this institution are diverse: from a complaint for the returning of an LPG gas cylinder or a mannequin (display dummy to present clothes in a store) — which are often essential tools for work — to the reimbursement of collateral worth several thousand bolivianos.

Among the millionaire cases that were settled in this way is, for example, the return of Bs. 2,000,000 which were provided as guarantee for a commercial service. After the signing of the agreement minutes, which is legally equivalent to a court sentence, this controversy was resolved in mid-2021.

The SIJPLU office, which depends on the Ministry of Justice, was created in 2015 and provides four services: legal guidance, legal sponsorship in civil and criminal cases, psychological care, and extrajudicial conciliation. The latter service is provided all working days of the year, even when the courts go on judicial holidays at the end of the year.

The head of SIJPLU, Aldo Torres, explains that because it is free of charge, extrajudicial conciliation benefits mainly people with low incomes.

According to Torres, 60% of all invitations issued by the SIJPLU at the request of one of the parties end up resolved through conciliation. This service has offices

in the capitals of the nine departments of the country, as well as in the City of El Alto, with offices in seven of its districts. By 2021, this institution had in total nine female and male conciliators throughout the country, and another 12 were in the process of being accredited.

Torres highlights the fact that all conciliators were trained in the courses provided by Proyecto Acceso a Justicia, financed by SDC, which ensured that the professionals disposed of the necessary sense of quality and the high commitment required for this legal work in a service of social assistance.



A user looks for information on the Plurinational Comprehensive Justice Services (SIJPLU). Photo: Governance Programme.



Interview of a woman. Photo: Proyecto Vida Sin Violencia.

Gender equity and a life free of violence

In the 1990s, in compliance with the global mandate, SDC in Bolivia included the gender approach in all its projects and programmes. The Vida Sin Violencia (Life Free of Violence – VSV) initiative was a bid not limited to physical aggression, but also worked on supporting women political candidates, and promoted impartial selection for jobs, equal wages and comprehensive training, among other topics.

Life free of violence

1995

SDC realizes efforts for incorporating the gender approach in rural development projects through a diagnosis done by Programa de Apoyo a Organizaciones No Gubernamentales (Non-governmental Organization Support Programme – NOGUB), which allowed identifying the roles played by women in rural communities.

2010

The awareness campaign titled “¡Ojo con la violencia!” (“Careful with Violence!”) was developed to reduce violence against women in Bolivia. In this framework, the efforts of the Servicios Legales Integrales Municipales (Municipal Comprehensive Legal Services – SLIM) begin.

2013

Programa Mejora de Servicios (Service Improvement Programme – PMS), run by PADEM, implements actions in the fight against violence harming women in rural municipalities and peri-urban areas. The National Police, the SLIMs, municipal governments, social organizations and the media of 80 municipalities of the country are involved in the programme.



EduActivista adolescents promoting relations free of violence. Photo: Proyecto Vida Sin Violencia.

The Chaco is likely one of the regions of Bolivia that is best organized in terms of territories (it has over 100 communities), but this does not mean that leaders of organizations apply gender equity. María Calizaya, a leader from Yacuiba, explains, “In the countryside, we [women] are very overlooked, and we know that this has to change; there are still more men in the positions.”

The leader from Yacuiba chose, together with her women colleagues, fairs, meetings and workshops as spaces from which they exercise their rights, with one objective: to be candidates in the local elections. “This is why we decided to participate in the contest ‘Municipio con rostro de mujer’ (‘Municipality with a Woman’s Face’),

part of Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal (PADEM) in 2018,” says Calizaya.

Besides learning about the legislation related to the fight against violence, they also increased their understanding on how a municipality is administrated. “Administrative and management topics, planning; these are the things we want to be well trained in,” explains María.

María Calizaya’s proposal was one of the winners of the contest “Municipality with a Woman’s Face”. This competition is part of SDC’s commitment in Bolivia to continuously strive to promote gender equity transversally in all of its projects.

2016

The Vida Sin Violencia (VSV) project is implemented, aiming to contribute to reducing violence and making it more likely for women to have dignified lives. The initiative is applied in 80 municipalities of La Paz, Cochabamba, Potosí, and Chuquisaca.

2019

Implementation of the Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo (Collaborative Dialogue and Support – DAC) project begins, promoting better cooperation between the State, civil society, the private sector, and academia to think and work together in proposing solutions to key challenges of inclusive and sustainable development, uniting their strength and knowledge.

Gradual progress

In the 1990s, complying with the global mandate, SDC included the gender approach in all its technical and non-technical projects and programmes, in order to highlight the decisive importance that women have in economic, political, cultural, legal, and institutional transformations.

Within the framework of popular participation, the supported projects and programmes received guidance on adopting a comprehensive gender approach, with the purpose of women taking on active roles in the municipalities and promoting equity in citizenry through female participation, in recognition of and exercise of their rights.

In coordination with other international cooperation agencies, SDC in Bolivia actively participated in the Comité Interagencial de Asuntos de Género (Inter-agency Committee on Gender Issues – CIAG), a thematic subgroup of the Group of Partners for the Development of Bolivia (Grupo de Socios para el Desarrollo de Bolivia – GRUS). The latter group seeks to “harmonize the lines of action, coordinate contributions and avoid doubling efforts and resources in the promotion of gender equality.”

Life Free of Violence

Julia Quispe is part of the group “The Bolivian Cholita Mountain Climbers” (“Las cholitas escaladoras de Bolivia”), women of Indian origin who conquer mountains with peaks above 6,000 metres above sea level (MASL). Julia began this adventure taking on the Illimani (6,462 MASL), and then continued on her career to climb the highest mountains of Bolivia: Chacaltaya (5,421 MASL), Huayna Potosí (6,090 MASL) and others. Presently, together with her colleagues, she is dedicated to taking tourists on mountain treks.

Her story relates to the “Life Free of Violence” community, an interactive virtual platform, which among other



content shares hundreds of stories of Bolivian women who transcend in time.

This platform is the result of the Life Free of Violence (VSV) project, implemented from 2016 to 2022, and is the result in which the efforts of SDC in contributing to gender equality and the fight against violence towards women are visible, work that the institution has been doing for more than 20 years.

The project, executed by Solidar Suisse, had the purpose of contributing to the reduction of the cases of violence against women in Bolivia and facilitating their access to justice.



The mountain climbing cholitas breaking gender stereotypes. Photo: Governance Programme.

The project made it possible for 74,000 women to obtain comprehensive care for the restitution of their rights. Also along these lines, the project worked with municipal counsellors, civil society, the media and the private sector, all articulated in “networks” against violence to improve public services through advocacy action in municipal governments and in other public institutions.

At the departmental level, coordination was done with department governments and other entities, such as the department health, education and social services. At the national level, the project worked with the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministries of Justice, Health, Communication and Education, and with the Judicial Body, the Anti-violence Police Taskforce, and other institutions.

SDC created synergies with the Embassy of Sweden. Solidar Suisse will continue to work in the topic, collecting best practices in combatting violence against women.

For “Comprehensive Law No. 348 for Ensuring Women a Life Free of Violence” (enacted in 2012) to be effective, it was essential to understand that in many scenarios its scope would not be possible without women’s participation. Therefore, the project promoted the campaign “Para una vida libre de violencia” (“For a Life Free of Violence”), in which community promoters built a bridge between rural areas and the Municipal Comprehensive Legal Services.



**Life Free of
Violence reached
80 municipalities
of Chuquisaca,
Cochabamba, La Paz,
and Potosí.**



EduActivistas, youth that no longer see violence as natural

Testimonial

Laughter, hurried work, running around, moments of silence before each reflection, and glances among the young people calling for action. This was the atmosphere of many workshops in which young people showed their capacity for individual and collective change. EduActivistas are a generation of youth from several universities who achieved alliances for combatting violence.

Jessica is one of the players in the project. For her, the challenge was not only in becoming trained, but also in solving conflicts that she herself was going through.

Today, Jessica praises the protocol for attending to cases of violence and the responsibilities of the Anti-violence Police Taskforce, the Municipal Comprehensive Legal Services, and the way women victims are treated, to help them and not revictimize them.

“Activism changed my life. At 18 I went through situations of psychological and physical violence from my partner. We lived together for two years; it was a horrifying situation. I was always alone and didn’t mention these things, not even to my family. I didn’t know how to get out of there until a professor from my university talked to me about the project, and little by little I’ve turned into a promoter,” she shares.

When she joined the workshops, she did not imagine that she was to become one of the most enthusiastic members. For Jessica, the EduActivistas network is proof that youth are key for achieving changes in violence issues.

This space allowed Jessica to show all her innate capacities and skills, working with social networks, for example. In a world full of clicks and on-line comments, young people like Jessica were given the task to make four videos for reflection, over 300 pieces of promotional art and a dozen strategies that even took them to TikTok. “We are a team of 25 ‘EduActivistas’ who have been working for three years. We have dealt with the matter of gender violence at several university faculty theatre pieces, fairs, encounters, training courses, and courses on the ABC of romantic love and its myths,” she recalls. “Before, I was afraid, but now I know that relationships free of violence can be built,” she stresses.

Notwithstanding the efforts, the repeated cases of machismo violence place Bolivia among the most violent countries for women in the region, which is why 2022 was declared “Year of the Cultural Revolution for De-patriarchalization”.



Fragment of an illustration of a life without violence. Photo: Red Nacional de EduActivistas.

Leaving footprints in Governance and Human Rights

Chronology of flagship projects

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1984	1997	PLAREG	Proyecto de Apoyo a la Planificación Regional Regional Planning Support Project
1985	1995	EMSO	Economic Management Strengthening Operations (Fortalecimiento de la Gestión Económica) Economic Management Strengthening Operations (Strengthening of Economic Management)
1994	2011	PDCR I – II – III	Programa de Desarrollo de las Comunidades Rurales Rural Community Development Programme
1996	2016	PADEM	Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal Municipal Democracy Support Programme
1996	-	PDPR	Programa de Defensa Pública Rural Rural Public Defence Programme
1997	2008	CDC	Proyecto Capacitación y Derechos Ciudadanos Training and Citizen Rights Training
1999	2005	EMPODER	Programa de Pueblos Indígenas y Empoderamiento Indigenous Peoples and Empowerment Programme
2001	2017	DP	Defensoría del Pueblo Ombudsman Office
2005	2009	PCC	Promoción de la Cultura Ciudadana Citizenry Culture Promotion
2009	2013	FORDECAPI	Fortalecimiento de Capacidades Institucionales Strengthening of Institutional Capacities
2013	2016	PMS	Programa para la Mejora de Servicios Locales Local Services Improvement Programme
2013	2022	AJ	Acceso a Justicia Access to Justice
2016	2022	VsV	Proyecto Vida Sin Violencia Life Free of Violence Project
2019	2023	DAC	Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo Dialogue and Collaborative Support Project

Some figures

- **Municipal Democracy Support Programme (PADEM)**

140 radio station teams from 80 municipalities were trained and programmes on municipal strengthening were prepared and disseminated.

- **Ombudsman Office**

17,500 reports of human rights violations were attended to by the Ombudsman Office in 2013.
48,000 people resolved their disputes and over **18,000** people in situations of vulnerability accessed quality public defence services by 2017.

- **Access to justice**

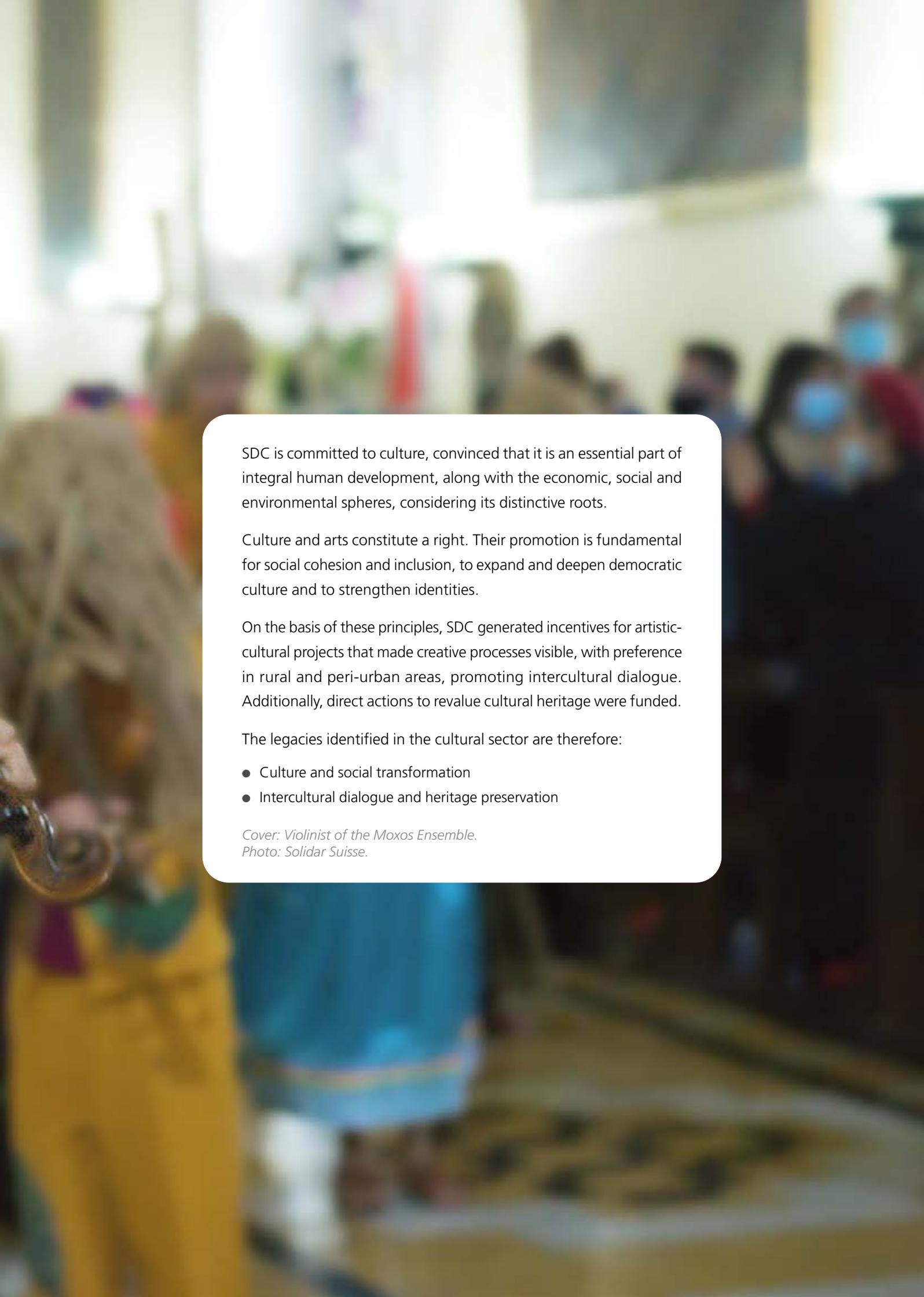
63,617 complete and partial conciliation agreements in judicial offices were reached; **127,234** people benefitted.

- **Life Free of Violence**

76,000 women received comprehensive care for the restitution of their rights and **68,000** people were jointly responsible for improving public services and for impacting the performance of public institutions.



Culture and Development



SDC is committed to culture, convinced that it is an essential part of integral human development, along with the economic, social and environmental spheres, considering its distinctive roots.

Culture and arts constitute a right. Their promotion is fundamental for social cohesion and inclusion, to expand and deepen democratic culture and to strengthen identities.

On the basis of these principles, SDC generated incentives for artistic-cultural projects that made creative processes visible, with preference in rural and peri-urban areas, promoting intercultural dialogue. Additionally, direct actions to revalue cultural heritage were funded.

The legacies identified in the cultural sector are therefore:

- Culture and social transformation
- Intercultural dialogue and heritage preservation

*Cover: Violinist of the Moxos Ensemble.
Photo: Solidar Suisse.*



Cultural protest. Photo: Solidar Suisse.

Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia implemented, since 2006, the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project, which maintains the commitment of contributing to the country's development by supporting cultural and artistic expressions.

Culture and social transformation

2006

Phases of cultural support begin with more specific actions of the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC) until 2014.

2012

47 artistic proposals are supported, from municipalities of the nine departments of Bolivia with the overall goal to promote art and the culture of peace.

2016

Proposals that contribute to social cohesion through the arts are supported. A total of 44 proposals were developed over four years.

2022

A new phase begins – with a specific challenge: the pandemic, and added to this big trial is the political situation Bolivia went through in 2019, which is why intercultural dialogue is added to the emphasis on social cohesion in this last phase.

By 2022, 33 initiatives are supported, which take place in 43 municipalities of the country.

The prisoners of one of the largest jails in Bolivia run, scream, fight, and laugh in different areas of this facility. Violence, tension and chaos permeate the atmosphere. This is what is felt by the spectators of the theatre piece "Palmasola", which was presented in alternative spaces which allowed its development along improvised scenarios and permitted the public to move around the characters on the stage.

The theatre piece was directed by the German Christopher Frick, with dramaturgy by Carolin Hochleichter, and script by journalist Jhonatan Torrez, who prior to writing did a thorough investigation of the Palmasola jail located in the City of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. The play is a proposal of Frick/KLARA Theaterproduktionen based in Basel, Switzerland. The cast was made up of European and Bolivian actors.

"Palmasola" presents the conditions in which 5,622 detained men and women live, distributed in seven areas, where an own political, social and economic structure based on money governs: those with economic resources have a better life, while those who do not live in abandonment and precariousness, a situation exacerbated by the overcrowding of this detention centre.

Based on this daily existence, the staging confronts the public with crude questions: What are rights and justice on paper and what are they in practice? According to what rules are the communities or groups organized? How do the children who are raised in this prison see the world and its rules?

Financed by the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC), in 2022 this production was presented at two international festivals in Bolivia, as well as in a tour in Europe.



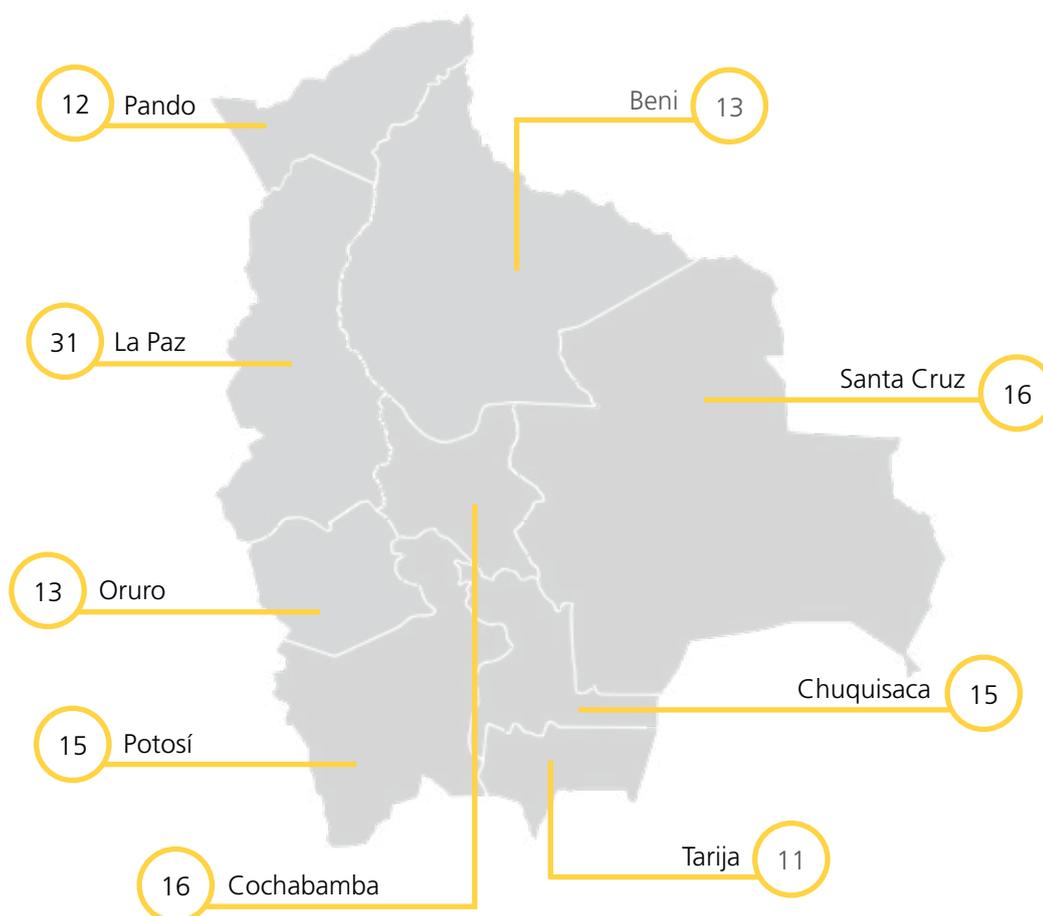
Scene of the theatre piece "Palmasola". Photo: Solidar Suisse.

Although the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia supported certain cultural initiatives since 2000, this work became strengthened as of 2006 through the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC), an initiative that arose with the perspective of contributing to the country's development by means of support for cultural and artistic expressions. In this way, three initial phases — 2006 to 2009, 2009 to 2012 and 2012 to

2104 — assisted several cultural initiatives in a more specific way.

Beginning in 2014, FSAC made a decided bid on supporting culture from the perspective "art for social transformation", a project that had Solidar Suisse as an agile implementing partner.

From 2014 to 2023, 142 projects won calls for proposals made by the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC)



Culture that transforms

The perspective of culture as a right and tool for social transformation, implemented since 2014, gave SDC's work a new boost in this field. In this manner, the initiatives supported through the different calls for proposals and actions of the FSAC went beyond support for art and allowed reinforcing civil society's participation in cultural life, based on democratic values, a resilient attitude, and the culture of peace.

This bid allowed constituting processes with a diversity of actors to identify elements of social cohesion through cultural and artistic practices.

Since 2014, SDC has supported, through the FSAC, the initiatives of artists, managers and cultural groups that through theatre, music, dance, painting, photography, and other arts, contribute to social cohesion and inclusion, and to strengthening cultural identities, respecting diversity.

In this way, the beneficiaries increased the sustainability of their work, and organized networks and mechanisms

to strengthen the dissemination and distribution of their artistic creation.

That's how the FSAC supported from 2014 to 2023 over 175 projects in the nine departments of the country, making special efforts to reach and prioritize activities in rural and peri-urban areas that traditionally could not access this kind of funding.

The selection criteria included supporting one initiative per department, prioritizing small municipalities and innovative proposals that innovate the production and consumption of artistic-creative expressions; and there was the aim to democratize culture by taking it to places and towns where access to it usually is quite limited.

The numerous funds developed over these years aimed to address transversally the issues of gender, human rights and the fight against violence.



*Jóvenes participan en el proyecto de incentivo al muralismo para motivar la cultura de paz, en San Ignacio de Moxos-Beni.
Foto: Proyecto Fondo Suizo de Apoyo a la Cultura.*



Armando Arancibia and Sadid Arancibia.
Photo: The "El País" newspaper of Tarija.

Democratization of the arts through murals

Testimonial

In 2016, Armando Arancibia (33) and his brother Sadid (27) decided to take their art from museums to the peri-urban streets of the City of Tarija. This was their inspiration to afterwards promote, through their group called Nereta Movimiento Artístico, a taste for art in youth and children.

"When we were invited to do an exhibit at the municipal House of Culture, many people from peri-urban neighbourhoods, including those who knew us, did not go to see our works. They felt intimidated by the aesthetic of the place, and they thought it was inaccessible for them. This is

why we decided to take our art to the streets," says Sadid, very proud of his achievements. With their project called "Muros que integran" ("Walls for Integration") — supported by SDC's Swiss Fund in Support of Culture in Bolivia in 2020 — the Arancibia brothers consolidated the space named Nereta y Ñandereko Territorio Cultural in a peri-urban neighbourhood of the City of Tarija known for its migrant settlements. The challenge: to democratize culture and the arts and strengthen intercultural links.

To work for a common good

Nereta y Ñandereko Territorio Cultural is an artistic cultural space located in the 19 de marzo neighbourhood, on Regimiento Aroma street, in Tarija. The location emerged as an initiative of the Arancibia brothers, who opened their premises for expressing thoughts, ideals, and especially to let passion flow through the artistic branches of the art collectives that are an active part of this movement.

The name of the centre comes from the Tupi Guarani language and means "common good". This is why the space is open for other artists and for the population in general. Not only art is produced at the centre, but it is used for teaching art as well, with the goal to democratize it. That's why payment is accepted also in the form of products from the region, such as food and handcrafts. This ensures that the works of art are within the reach of everyone and that people have access to a form of artistic apprenticeship.



Artistic space "Nereta y Ñandereko Territorio Cultural" Photo: Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project.



Musicians of the Native Instruments Experimental Orchestra. Photo: Solidar Suisse.

Intercultural dialogue and heritage preservation

Supporting the projects of artists from Bolivia and Switzerland to strengthen intercultural dialogue and contribute to the qualification of local cultural and young artist groups was an important commitment for SDC. This goal of cultural exchange was also reflected in encounters of artistic groups of the Amazon region and the Andes. Additionally, the revaluation of the identity roots was promoted, giving priority to safeguarding both cultural and archaeological heritage.

Intercultural dialogue

2002

Funding for the Festival Internacional de Jazz (Festijazz), organized in the City of La Paz, with the participation of Swiss ensembles. This support continued over the years.

2014

First support for Bienal Internacional de Arte Sonoro Sonandes, in the City of La Paz. Swiss artists participated.

2015

Presentation of an adaptation of the work "The Visit of the Old Lady", written in 1955 by Swiss playwright Friedrich Dürrenmatt. This was possible in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, the Autonomous Municipal Government of La Paz and other institutions.



Sounds of violins, contraltos and sopranos join the tunes of the Andean wind instruments tarkas and pinkillos of Todos Santos. This is how the concert named “Lo sagrado: música de los Andes y de la Amazonía boliviana” (“What is sacred: music of the Bolivian Andes and Amazonia”) began, performed in the City of La Paz. The concert was the result of a cultural exchange between the Moxos Ensemble and the Experimental Orchestra of Native Instruments (OEIN), in which over 40 musicians participated in mid-2021. It was a celebration that brought the audience closer to the baroque sounds of the Amazon jungle and the traditional instruments with pre-Colombian Andean roots.

It all began in the Amazonia of Beni. The opportunities for artistic mobility in the country are very limited. Going to San Ignacio de Moxos (in the Department of Beni) from the City of La Paz requires travelling over 500 kilometres to the City of Trinidad.

This was the trip that the musicians of OEIN made, carrying all their instruments, to the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. This centre protects the entire legacy of baroque Jesuit missionary music, and shared the sounds of the sikus played in Aymara and Quechua communities of Bolivia.

This activity and similar ones were supported by the FSAC, in order to promote spaces for enrichment and dialogue through the exchange of diverse cultural expressions.

For Rosario Tindal, the person in charge of the FSAC project at Solidar Suisse (the executing NGO of the FSAC since 2014), promoting these exchanges allows to respond to the context by developing “spaces of encounter” and intercultural dialogue that contribute to the social cohesion of Bolivian society.

Cultural exchange and heritage preservation

2005

Inauguration of the Regional Archaeological Museum of Pariti Island in Lake Titicaca making visible a ceramic collection of the late Tiahuanaco period. This inauguration was coordinated with the Chachapuma Project.

2016

In the framework of an agreement signed between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and SDC, the **project named Conservación de Sitios Patrimoniales Monumentales (Conservation of Monument Heritage Sites) is developed**, carrying out cultural actions in Culli Culli (Sica Sica), Cónдор Amaya, and Huayllani, in La Paz.

2016

“Lo Sagrado: música de los Andes y de la Amazonía boliviana” (“What is Sacred: Music of the Bolivian Andes and Amazonia”), is the result of a cultural exchange between the Moxos Ensemble and the Native Instruments Experimental Orchestra (OEIN).

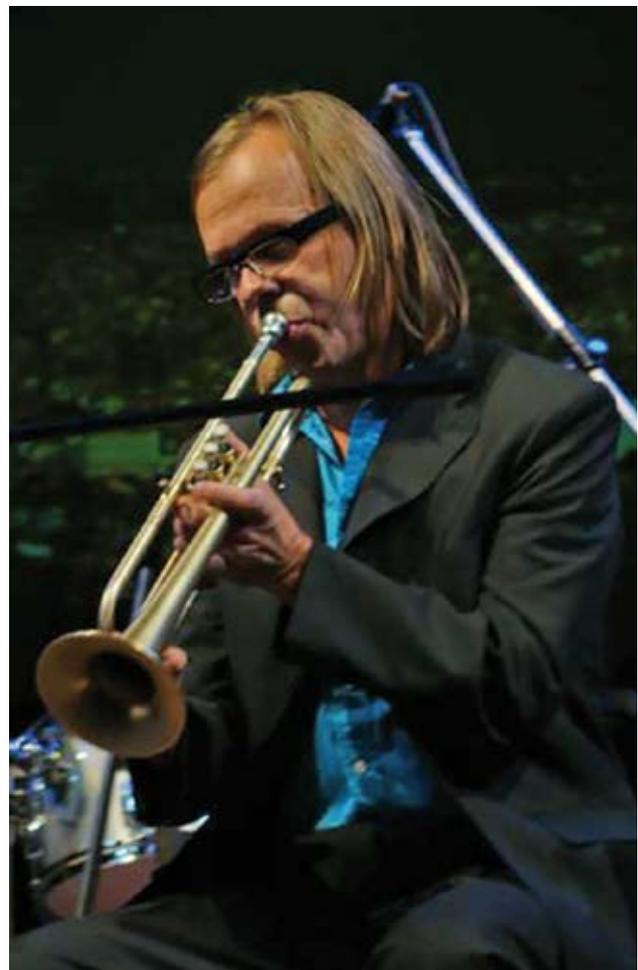


Cultural exchange between the Moxos Ensemble and Experimental Orchestra of Native Instruments. Photo: Solidar Suisse.

Exchanges with Swiss artists

This type of support not only allowed Bolivian artists to travel within the country, but also exchanges with Swiss artists. One of the main characteristics of this proposal was to foster the integration of a diversity of actors, emphasizing the promotion of intercultural dialogue and respect.

Festivals such as Sonandes, the International Jazz Festival (Festival Internacional de Jazz) and the International Theatre Festival of La Paz (Festival Internacional de Teatro) were some of the Bolivian platforms that welcomed troupes, ensembles and professionals from both countries. For example, in 2022, Paykuna, a Swiss-Bolivian band proposed a concert of symbiosis of Bolivian traditional music and the modern aesthetic of jazz, creating with sound volcanic landscapes of the Andes, tropical jungles of Amazonia and savannas of the Chaco.



Peter Schärli, artist and trumpeter. Photo: Solidar Suisse.

Swiss troupes and ensembles at Bolivian festivals and events

Festival Sonandes	<p>2014 Diatribes dúo de música concreta e improvisación libre de Suiza.</p> <p>2021 Residencia de creación The Witness.</p>
Coro sinfónico UPB and Coral Nova	<p>2018 Dos misas, dos homenajes, concierto dedicado a los compositores Julio Barragán (Bolivia) y Paul Huber (Suiza).</p>
Orquesta La Típica	<p>2018 Carnaval en las alturas.</p>
Festijazz	<p>2002 Reto Weber Squeeze Band.</p> <p>2004 Four Roses.</p> <p>2013 Reto Weber Squeeze Band.</p> <p>2015 Trío Schärli, Moreira, Feigenwinter.</p> <p>2016 Banda Kinsa.</p> <p>2017 Peter Schärli.</p> <p>2018 Fischermanns Orchestra.</p> <p>2022 Paykuna.</p>
Fitaz	<p>2014 "No es tiempo de sirenas" de Apsara.</p> <p>2022 "Hocus popus" by Philippe Saire.</p> <p>2022 "Palmasola" by Christoph Frick.</p>



Paykuna ensemble. Photo: Festijazz.

Preservation of cultural heritage

Another important line for SDC was the execution of direct actions to support the safeguarding and conservation of heritage and archaeological sites, colonial churches and cultural landscapes. These initiatives boosted a strong protagonist role for communities and civil society organizations to be jointly responsible for caring for the protection of cultural heritage.

Although this type of technical and financial support for heritage conservation initiatives in the country was formalized only in the second phase of the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture, this spirit of SDC to promote projects of this type could be witnessed already before. In 2005, for example, the Regional Archaeological Museum of Pariti Island on Lake Titicaca was inaugurated in the framework of the Chachapuma Project.

The construction of this museum — located in the minor part of Lake Titicaca, 82 kilometres from the City of La Paz — allowed the display of a long research process that

began in 2003 and that culminated with an exhibition of 60 archaeological pieces that were discovered.

For archaeologist Jedú Sagárnaga, in charge of the archaeological research, SDC's participation in the museum's construction was essential for exhibiting unique archaeological pieces, such as ceramic vases known as wako portraits.

"The seven vases are constituted by two pairs and a group of three vases quite similar to each other. The most important pair includes a vase that is almost complete, that we informally named Lord of the Ducks," says Sagárnaga in the Bolivian archaeology magazine dedicated to the Chachapuma Project, financed by SDC in 2007.

Among the actions, the megaproject "Conservation of Heritage Sites" stands out; it was realized from 2016 to 2018 in the framework of an agreement with the Ministry of Culture with an investment of over one million bolivianos.

Heritage and conservation

Between 2016 and 2023, initiatives for the conservation and rescue of cultural heritage were supported in several municipalities of the country. The first of these experiences was the restoration of chullpas or funeral towers of Qiwaya, in the Municipality of Puerto Pérez; Cónдор Amaya, in Umala; and Culli Culli, in Sica Sica, all of them in the Department of La Paz.

Similar heritage conservation works were done in the City of Sucre, Chuquisaca, between 2020 and 2021, with the restoration of the outer façade of the Chapel "Virgen del Carmen" (Capilla de la Virgen).

In the Municipality of Roboré, Santa Cruz, the documentation, conservation and presentation of cave art was facilitated from 2022 to 2023.

And in the new tourist destination Toro Toro, Potosí, which preserves the geological and archaeological structure of

fossils of organisms like dinosaurs from Jurassic times (more than 150 million years ago) and a system of unique canyons with more than 1,000 meters in depth, the municipality was supported in 2023 in the protection of the archaeological heritage of their territory and in the transmission and dissemination of its value to the population and national and international visitors.



"Lord of the Ducks" vase.
Photo: Regional Archaeological Museum of Pariti Island.

Chullpas: enclosures of respect and homage

Testimonial

Wind, the rain and neglect increase the risk of disappearance of funeral monuments that the Aymara of the Altiplano built centuries ago to conserve the bodies of their rulers, and therefore also their ethnic, social and cultural identity. Switzerland participated in rescuing these historical testimonials.

A pilot plan agreed on between the Ministry of Culture and SDC (for a sum of USD 150,000) allowed to do a diagnostic and adopt adequate restoration measures in the archaeological sites of Culli Culli, Qiwaya and Cóndor Amaya in the communities of Sica Sica, Puerto Pérez and Umala in the Department of La Paz.

The dignity of Mallku or Hilakata represented at the time the highest hierarchical level of power and ethnic custody to be worshiped and conserved. To some extent, it is a role like that of the pharaohs, kings, clerics, or persons of high political standing throughout the world's history.

Made of mud and straw or of stone, these sacred mausoleums, of which vestiges remain mostly in Peru, Bolivia and Chile, are small spaces with round, and square or rectangular bases, in the shape of towers or boxes in which the remains of the deceased chiefs were deposited.

For example, the chullpas of Culli Culli, in Sica Sica, have a rectangular form, are made of adobe and straw, have triangular doors and are 3 to 6 metres in height. They housed the bodies of lineage figures, who were placed in the foetal position, protected by capsular bags made of textiles or llama leather, and in some cases even baskets of reeds.



Pre-Colombian chullpa. Photo: Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project.

The cultural agreement signed between the Ministry and SDC indicates that the archaeological sites of Culli Culli, Qiwaya and Cóndor Amaya each received individual funding for the diagnostic and recovery of the chullpas of those areas.

The residents of Sica Sica, Puerto Pérez and Umala benefitted from the recovery of the funeral towers that are part of their identity and a legacy of their ancestors, as they are testimonials not only of architecture and spirituality, but also of centuries old techniques in agriculture and livestock breeding, pottery and textiles (made mostly of camelid wool).



Restored chullpas in Culli Culli. Photo: Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project.

In Bolivia there are over 300 chullpas, mostly in the departments of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí. They belong to the time of the Aymara lordships, though some of them were also built during the reign of the Incas.

The Mallkus or Hilakatas did not undertake their final journey alone. It is believed that besides being provided with food and clothing for cover, they were accompanied by family members or servants.

“It is supposed that the more than 300 chullpas in Bolivia are of different styles and materials, though most of them are in a bad state of conservation,” says José Luis Paz, Head of the Archaeology and Museums Unit of the Ministry of Cultures of Bolivia, in reference to the chullpas built during the Aymara confederations (1200 BC to 1400 AD).

“For us this is sacred, as if the chullpas were our great grandparents, and every June 21st we make offerings to

them for things to go well for us. It’s a matter of faith”, says 84-year-old Tomás Santos, a resident of Culli Culli Alto.

“Many of the chullpas conserve their status as ritual centres intact. We must promote their conservation and cultural development to contribute to the economies of these communities,” adds José Luis Paz, thus highlighting the respect that exists for the Andean cosmovision, the greatest expression of which takes place every Aymara new year at the ruins of Tiahuanaco.

The numerous studies carried out over a long period of time by Bolivian and international archaeologists agree regarding the historical, social and economic importance of the Aymara funeral structures.

The cultural agreement between the Ministry of Cultures and SDC therefore opened up prospects for rescuing the chullpas of the Altiplano.

A must-see route: Ruta SaboreArte — Chiquitano flavours and arts

Testimonial

Men and women of San José de Chiquitos, a town in the Department of Santa Cruz, decided to join efforts to boost the socioeconomic development of local families and revalue their culture. To do this, they transmit the knowledge and flavours of Chiquitano cuisine to the *posokas* (“visitors” in Chiquitano), through Ruta SaboreArte, a proposal for the support of sustainable tourism based on encounters with local people for culinary and cultural experiences funded by SDC.

Luis Felipe Pari, better known as “Don Pitágoras” — a local artisan, cook, philosopher, and mathematician —, opens the doors of his house to share his knowledge of the Chiquitano culture. At the La Tranquera stopping place [“*pascana*”, a traditional hostel or tavern], the host not only indulges the palates of visitors with the delicious *majao* (rice with beef jerky, eggs and fried bananas) and quenches their thirst with the traditional *somó* (corn drink), but also encourages them to carve a mask of the “Chiquitano grandfather”, a picaresque character in the local traditional dance that jokingly mocks the Spanish colonizers. This unique experience skilfully combines gastronomy with the art of the Chiquitano culture.

Proud of his *pascana*, Don Pitágoras says that he used to sell banana and cassava soup at a corner of the main square, made with a recipe he learned from his mother, but now has a gastronomical tourism space in his own home thanks to Ruta SaboreArte. His house is part of the tourist route taken by those who explore the Municipality of San José de Chiquitos, in the heart of the Chiquitania, in the southeast of the Department of Santa Cruz.

Every typical dish that the visitors taste in the numerous routes that Ruta SaboreArte offers brings to mind

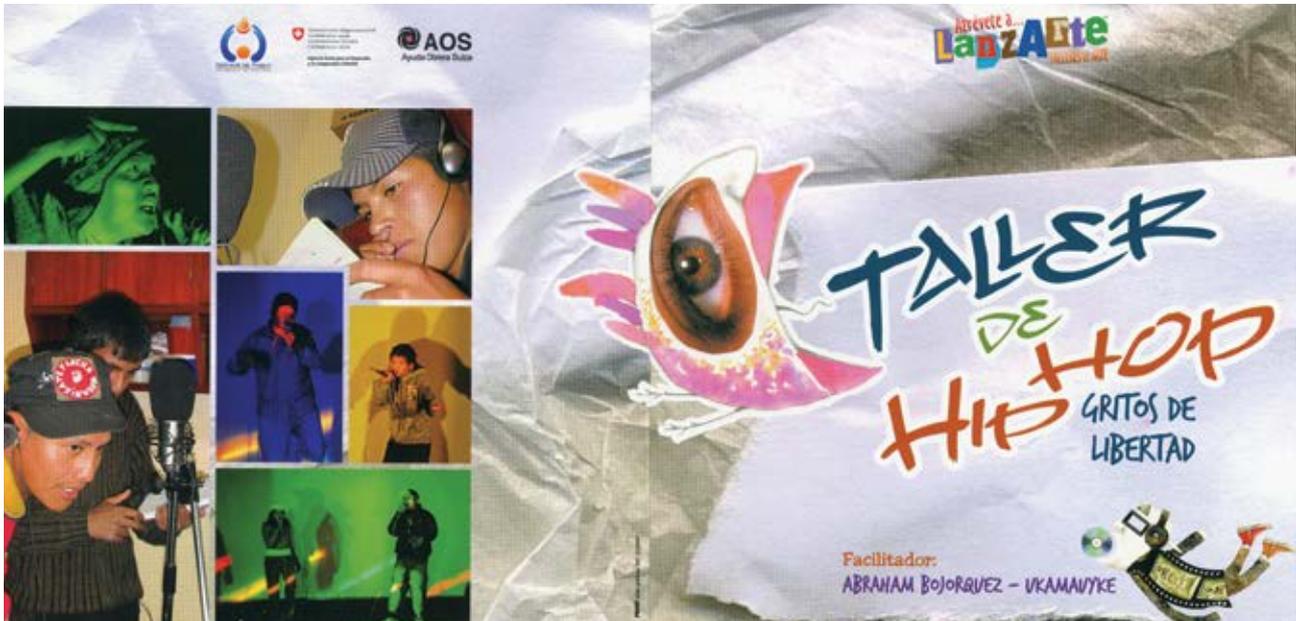
Chiquitano grandmothers and grandfathers. In other words, this circuit is an invitation to learn about ancestral Chiquitano knowledge and traditions, the Spanish inheritance and the Jesuit legacy present in the culture and in the cooking, as an expression of the local culture.

The tourism routes are designed to explore San José de Chiquitos according to the interests of the visitors. The visits combine cultural stopping places, gastronomic experiences of traditional cooking, craft workshops, and historical and natural sites.



Luis Felipe Pari (“Don Pitágoras”).
Photo: Swiss Fund in Support of Culture project.

Leaving footprints in Culture



Poster of the hip-hop workshop "Gritos de Libertad". Photo: Proyecto LanzArte.

Some projects that benefitted from the Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC)

- **Cultural exchange**

A cultural exchange took place with encounters between artistic groups of the Amazon region, the Yungas, the Andes, and the Valleys. It focused on highlighting cultural roots to promote tourism and protect archaeological heritage.

- **Culture and social transformation**

SDC adopted the slogan "Culture is not a luxury in life, it is life itself" and employed art as a tool for social transformation.

- **Intercultural dialogue and direct actions**

SDC supported artistic projects in Bolivia and Switzerland to foster intercultural dialogue and raise the artistic quality of local cultural groups and young artists.

- **Creation of artistic incentives**

By means of various resources and support, the fund supported the creation of artistic initiatives in rural and peri-urban areas, with the aim of promoting dialogue, participation and collaborative construction with the local population.

- **Initiatives to salvage cultural heritage**

The fund supported actions to protect and conserve the heritage of archaeological sites in Bolivia. Such was the case of the efforts made, for example, by the Cave Art Research Society (Sociedad de Investigación de Arte Rupestre — SIARB) in the country.



Photo: Ariel Duranböger

54

Years of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia

Having started concentrating on the agricultural and livestock breeding sector, Switzerland remained present throughout successive non-democratic regimes, such as in the 1970s, when there were only brief constitutional governments. It however was forced to discontinue its work for a short period in the 1980s and renew it in 1982 with the return of democracy.

The then called Swiss Technical Cooperation (COTESU) opted for new programmes and projects, with collaborative multi-stakeholder platforms that articulated with various actors at the national and local-municipal levels.

In the 1990s, work in empowering indigenous-farmer peoples, young people and women in situations of vulnerability was fundamental for the purpose of reducing poverty and inequality, and for promoting the exercise of rights.

The experiences accumulated regarding empowerment left a considerable mark in Bolivia: people exposed to situations of violations of their rights were strengthened with knowledge, skills, mechanisms, and tools that allowed them better conditions to access a dignified life.

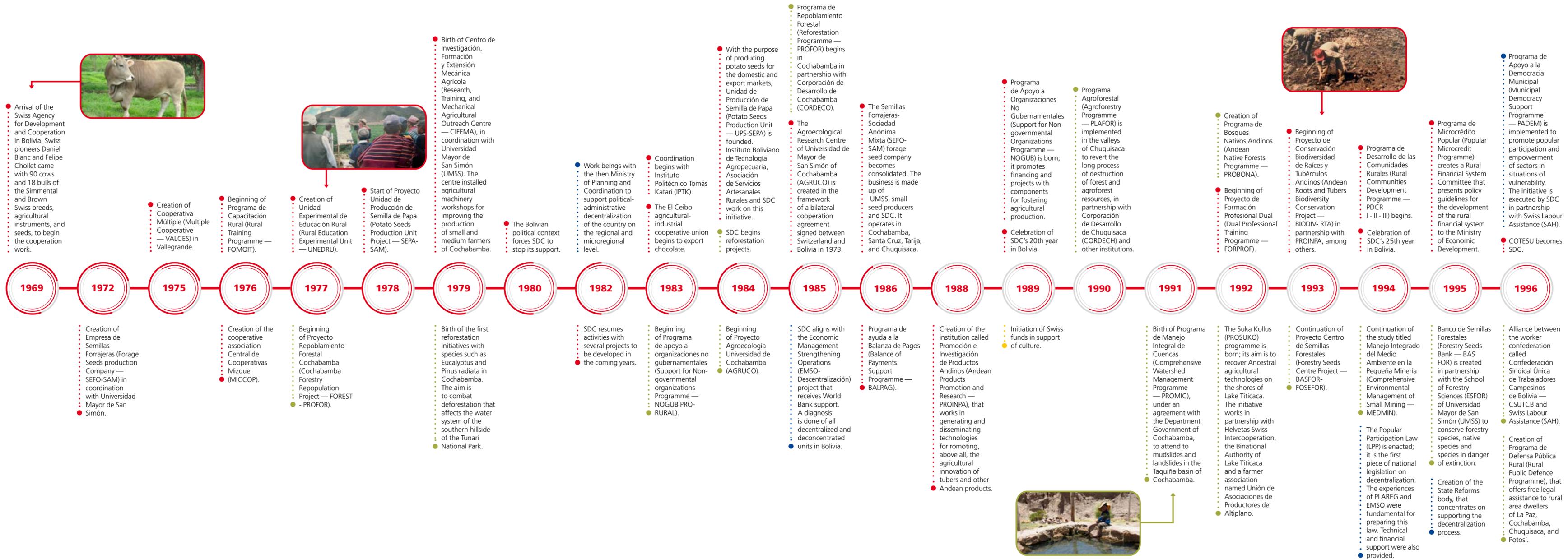
Since the 2000 decade, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation consolidated a cooperation model that encouraged the creation and design of joint actions between the government and civil society (development partners).

In later years, SDC opted for long-term support, resilience in the face of complex situations, sustainability, and building bridges between the diversity of actors in Bolivia, always with the rationale of strengthening the protagonist role of local actors.

In recent decades, the compilation of data, the improvement of conditions and possibilities for training and the exchange of experiences were key, which among other things led to the creation of long-term "ideas laboratories" together with universities, civil society, associations, producers and others.

Strategically, the work concentrated on four broad fields of action: economic development; preservation of the environment and natural resource management and climate change adaptation; governance and human rights; and finally, culture and development.

We hope that this step-by-step outlook regarding the support that SDC was able to provide over these 54 years will help to recap the extraordinary journey and that the advances achieved jointly with all the stakeholders will be useful for the future of Bolivia and for its development.





1997

- Beginning of Citizenry and Rights Training project (Proyecto de Capacitación y Derechos Ciudadanos – CDC).

1998

- Regional potato project (Papa Andina).

1999

- The enterprise producing agricultural mechanization CIFEMA-SAM becomes a mixed company with State and private capital. Finalization of agreement between UMSS and SDC.
- The Office of Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples is born, which was later to be called Empowerment and Indigenous Peoples (EMPODER). The initiative reaches poor populations that suffer from violations of their rights.

2000

- EMPODER, together with the Ombudsman Office and the Catholic Church, promotes an encounter between two ayllus, the Laimes and Qaqachacas, whose confrontations ended up in deaths. A peace agreement is achieved.

2001

- Beginning of Proyecto Nacional de Leguminosas (National Beans Project – PRONALAG).

2003

- The Aire Limpio (Clean Air) project is born. The initiative has the task of reducing contaminating gas emissions from the vehicle fleet, with coverage in the cities of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, La Paz, El Alto, Oruro, Potosí, Sucre, Tarija, Trinidad, Tiquipaya, Sacaba, and Quillacollo.

2004

- Continuation of Programa de Promoción de la Cultura Ciudadana (Citizenry Culture Promotion – PCC).
- Beginning of the municipal telephone and radio consulting practice of Counsellor Edilicia.

2005

- Inauguration of the Regional Archaeological Museum of Pariti Island in Lake Titicaca, coordinated with the Chachapuma Project.

2006

- Birth of Governance for Sustainable Territorial Development Programme (Programa de Gobernabilidad para el Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible – CONCERTAR), that works in watershed management with nine groups of municipalities in five departments.
- Professional technical training begins through Programa de Capacitación Laboral (Labour Training Programme – PROCAP), in cooperation with various institutions, such as the Education Episcopal Commission, the FAUTAPO Foundation, and the Ministry of Education.

2007

- The Disaster Risk Reduction Program (PRRD) introduces risk management in municipalities through training and raising awareness in the local actors.

2009

- Sistema Plurinacional de Certificación de Competencias (Plurinational Skills Certification System – SPPC) is created by means of an interinstitutional agreement between the Ministry of Education and SDC.
- Institutional Capacity Strengthening in culture and climate change (Fortalecimiento de Capacidades Institucionales – FORDEC API).

2010

- The Programa de Capacitación Laboral (PROCAP) grows and expands its coverage; it takes on the name Professional Technical Training Project (Proyecto de Formación Técnica Profesional – FTP).
- The Programme Rural Entrepreneurial Development Services (Programa de Servicios para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural – PROSEDER) begins in 30 municipalities.

2012

- The Inclusive Insurance (Seguros Inclusivos) project is born. It proposes covering specific insurance needs of vulnerable people in a simple and timely manner.

2013

- The Programa Innovación Tecnológica en la Agricultura (PIC) project begins its fourth phase and transfers its model to the State entity INIAF, and through it to the National Agricultural and Forestry Innovation System (Sistema Nacional de Innovación Agrícola Forestal).
- Proyecto Acceso a Justicia (Access to Justice Project) is created, aiming to deepen the search for a culture of peace through mediation (conciliation) as an alternative conflict resolution mechanism. Work is done with five State entities, including the Ministry of Justice.

2014

- Beginning of the project Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth Promotion (Proyecto de Promoción del Crecimiento Económico Inclusivo y Sostenible – PROMyPE-JIWASA).
- The Swiss Fund in Support of Culture (FSAC) incorporates the perspective of “art for social transformation”.

2016

- In the framework of an agreement signed between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and SDC, the project Conservation of Monumental Heritage Sites (Conservación de Sitios Patrimoniales Monumentales) is developed and carries out actions in Cullu, Sica Sica, Cónдор Amaya, and Huayllani, in La Paz.

2017

- Better Gold Initiative (BGI).
- The Plurinational Farming Early Warning System is created: Technology and local knowledge are used comprehensively to monitor the weather and to provide timely information on climatic threats (Sistema Plurinacional de Alerta Temprana Agropecuaria – SAT Agropecuario).

2018

- Consolidation of SDC’s work in the field of judicial and extrajudicial conciliation, in all nine departments.

2019

- The project Support for Dialogue and Collaboration promotes joint work between Bolivian municipalities and departments, civil society, the private sector and academia on solutions in local key governance challenges in the economic, the social and the environmental sector (Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo - DAC).

2022

- With the event “Our legacy, because every drop matters” (“Nuestro legado, porque cada gota cuenta”), organized in La Paz, the GIA project comes to an end, after over 30 years of support to the water sector in Bolivia by SDC.

2024

- SDC officially leaves Bolivia.

- Economic Development
- Preservation, Natural Resource Management and the Environment
- Governance and Human Rights
- Culture and Development



● Programa de Apoyo al Sector Financiero (Financial Sector Support Programme – PROFIN) is created, which allows access to financial resources for poor rural sectors in 191 municipalities of the country.

● Programa de Fomento Empresarial (Enterprise Fostering Programme – FOMEN) is born. It is executed in the Departments of La Paz, Santa Cruz, Potosí, and Alto. Its aim is to increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized businesses.

● The Agua, Tierra y Campesinado (Water, Land and Farmers – ATICA) project is implemented in municipalities of Cochabamba. The initiative’s purpose is to lead local actors towards optimizing the use of water for agriculture and livestock breeding. The proposal is executed by Swisscontact.

● Pro-Rural is founded, based on the NOGUB (Programa de Apoyo a Organizaciones Gubernamentales) team. The initiative promotes the development and strengthening of rural economic units and their organizations.

● Conclusion of the project named Andean Roots and Tubers Biodiversity Conservation Project (Proyecto Conservación Biodiversidad de Raíces y Tubérculos Andinos – PROINPA).

● Red de Monitoreo de la Calidad del Aire (MoniCA Network) is established in Bolivia. The cities of La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz have air quality monitoring networks.

● Programa Reducción de Riesgo de Desastres (Disaster Risk Reduction Programme – PRRD) is born. Its aim is to prevent risks attributable to climate change, executed under the approach of resilience. It reaches all nine departments of the country, 12 groups of municipalities and 220 municipalities.

● EMPODER promotes the eradication of forced labour and labour exploitation in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and the Ombudsman Office.

● Programa Innovación Tecnológica en la Agricultura (Programme of Technological Innovation in Agriculture – PIC) begins, with coverage in 26 municipalities of four departments. It is executed in a partnership with the Consejo Departamental de Competitividad entities of Cochabamba and Chuquisaca, and with Red de Apoyo al Sector Productivo of Tarija.

● The implementation of the Biocultura project begins, concentrating on the conservation of Andean ecosystems in 27 municipalities of La Paz, Oruro, Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, and Tarija.

● The awareness campaign “¡Ojo con la violencia!” (“Careful with Violence!”) is born, aiming to reduce violence against women. In this framework, the work of the Servicios Legales Integrales Municipales (Municipal Comprehensive Legal Services – SLIM) begins.

● The Inclusive Insurance (Seguros Inclusivos) project is born. It proposes covering specific insurance needs of vulnerable people in a simple and timely manner.

● PADEM supports the new municipalities of Bolivia in the topics of health, education and the protection of women in situations of violence in the framework of decentralization, governance and the development of the Services Improvement Programme – PMS (Programa Mejora de Servicios).

● The Comprehensive Water Management – GIA project (Gestión Integral del Agua – GIA) is born to strengthen and transfer capacities in water and watershed management.

● The Vida Sin Violencia (Life Free of Violence – VSV) project is implemented, seeking to reduce violence and increase the likelihood of dignified lives. The initiative is implemented in 80 municipalities of La Paz, Cochabamba, Potosí, and Chuquisaca.

● The Mercados Inclusivos (Inclusive Markets) project gives continuity to the Rural Markets project, working with family producer units and farmers vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

● Consolidation of SDC’s work in the field of judicial and extrajudicial conciliation, in all nine departments.

● Swiss Humanitarian Aid’s Grupo de Apoyo e Intervención Rápida (Rapid Intervention and Support Group – GIAR) helps in fire mitigation in the Bolivian Amazonia and Chiquitania.

● SDC announces its phasing out from Bolivia and several other Latin American countries.

● SDC officially leaves Bolivia.

● The Mercados Rurales (Rural Markets) project begins as a proposal to improve the living conditions of vulnerable people who work in agriculture and livestock in rural areas, by strengthening capacities, financial education and access to markets.



● Applied Research for Adaptation to Climate Change Project begins (Proyecto de Investigación Aplicada en Adaptación al Cambio Climático – PIA-ACC).

● The project Municipal Environmental Management (Gestión Ambiental Municipal – GAM) begins. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation incorporates the topic of wastewater treatment and solid waste management in its work agenda.

Chronology of flagship projects of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia

Economic Development

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1972	2000	SEFO-SAM	Semilla Forrajera Forage Seeds
1978	1998	CIFEMA-SAM	Proyecto Centro de Investigación, Formación y Extensión Mecánica Agrícola Research, Training, and Mechanical Agricultural Outreach Centre Project
1978	2007	SEPA-SAM	Proyecto Unidad de Producción de Semilla de Papa Potato Seeds Production Unit Project
1983	2002	NOGUB	Programa de Apoyo a Organizadores no Gubernamentales Support for Non-governmental Organizations Programme
1984	2006	AGRUCO	Agroecología Universidad de Cochabamba Universidad de Cochabamba Agroecology
1989	2006	PROINPA	Programa de Investigación de la Papa Potato Research Programme
1992	2003	BIODIV-RTA	Proyecto Coservación Biodiversidad de Raíces y Tubérculos Andinos Biodiversity of Andean Roots and Tubers Conservation Project
1992	2008	PROSUKO	Programa Interinstitucional de Suka Kollus Suka Kollus Interinstitutional Programme
1995	2000	FIE-Crédito	Proyecto FIE- CREDITO FIE- CREDITO Project
1997	2006	PROFIN	Programa Apoyo al Sector Financiero Financial Sector Support Programme
1998	2009	FOMEN	Fomento Empresarial Entrepreneurial Support
1998	2010	PAPA ANDINA	Proyecto Regional de Papa Regional Potato Project
2001	2016	PRONALAG	Proyecto Nacional de Leguminosas National Legume Project
2006	2017	PRO-CAP	Proyecto Capacitación Laboral Labour Training Project
2006	2023	FTP	Proyecto Formación Técnica Profesional Professional Technical Training Project
2007	2015	PIC	Programa Innovación Tecnológica en la Agricultura Agricultural Technological Innovation Programme
2010	2015	PROSEDER	Programa de Servicios para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural Rural Entrepreneurial Development Services Programme
2012	2022	SI	Proyecto Seguros Inclusivos Inclusive Insurance Project
2013	2017	PMR	Proyecto Mercados Rurales Rural Markets Project
2014	2023	PROMYPE-JIWASA	Proyecto PROMYPE-JIWASA PROMyPE-JIWASA Project
2017	2023	MI	Proyecto Mercados Inclusivos Inclusive Markets Project



Quality control in a quinoa collection and processing company. Photo: Inclusive Markets Programme.

Preservation and Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1977	2000	FOREST-PROFOR	Proyecto Repoblamiento Forestal Cochabamba Cochabamba Forestry Reforestation Project
1988	2000	PLAFOR	Programa Agroforestal de Chuquisaca Chuquisaca Agroforestry Programme
1991	2008	PROMIC	Programa Manejo Intergral de Cuencas Comprehensive Watershed Management Programme
1992	2005	PROBONA	Programa de Bosques Nativos Andinos Andean Native Forests Programme
1993	2003	BASFOR-FOSEFOR	Proyecto Centro de Semillas Forestales Forestry Seeds Centre Project
1994	2000	MEDMIN	Manejo Integrado del Medio Ambiente en la Pequeña Minería Comprehensive Environmental Management of Small Mining
1999	2007	ATICA	Programa Agua Tierra Campesina Farmer Water Land Programme
2003	2017	AIRE LIMPIO	Aire Limpio Clean Air
2005	2018	PRRD	Proyecto Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres Disaster Risk Reduction Project
2006	2010	CONCERTAR	Programa de Gobernabilidad para el Desarrollo Territorial Sostenible Governability for Sustainable Territorial Development Programme
2010	2015	GESTOR	Gestión de Recursos Naturales y Cambio Climático Natural Resources Management and Climate Change
2010	2023	BIOCULTURA	Biocultura Bio-culture
2014	2022	GIA	Proyecto de Gestión Integral del Agua Comprehensive Water Management Project
2014	2023	GAM	Proyecto Gestión Ambiental Municipal Municipal Environmental Management Project
2014	2023	PIAACC	Proyecto de Investigación Aplicada en Adaptación al Cambio Climático Applied Research for Adaptation to Climate Change Project
2017	2025	BGI (Better Gold Initiative)	Iniciativa Oro Responsable Better Gold Initiative



SDC opted for comprehensive water management (water harvest for periods of drought). Photo: Proyecto Gestión Integral del Agua.

Governance and Human Rights

BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
1984	1997	PLAREG	Proyecto de Apoyo a la Planificación Regional Regional Planning Support Project
1985	1995	EMSO	Economic Management Strengthening Operations (Fortalecimiento de la Gestión Económica) Economic Management Strengthening Operations (Strengthening of Economic Management)
1994	2011	PDCR I – II – III	Programa de Desarrollo de las Comunidades Rurales Rural Community Development Programme
1996	2016	PADEM	Programa de Apoyo a la Democracia Municipal Municipal Democracy Support Programme
1996	-	PDPR	Programa de Defensa Pública Rural Rural Public Defence Programme
1997	2008	CDC	Proyecto Capacitación y Derechos Ciudadanos Training and Citizen Rights Training
1999	2005	EMPODER	Programa de Pueblos Indígenas y Empoderamiento Indigenous Peoples and Empowerment Programme
2001	2017	DP	Defensoría del Pueblo Ombudsman Office
2005	2009	PCC	Promoción de la Cultura Ciudadana Citizenry Culture Promotion
2009	2013	FORDECAPI	Fortalecimiento de Capacidades Institucionales Strengthening of Institutional Capacities
2013	2016	PMS	Programa para la Mejora de Servicios Locales Local Services Improvement Programme
2013	2022	AJ	Acceso a Justicia Access to Justice
2016	2022	VsV	Proyecto Vida Sin Violencia Life Free of Violence Project
2019	2023	DAC	Proyecto Diálogo y Apoyo Colaborativo Dialogue and Collaborative Support Project



Offices of the court, Sucre. Photo: Proyecto Acceso a Justicia.

Culture

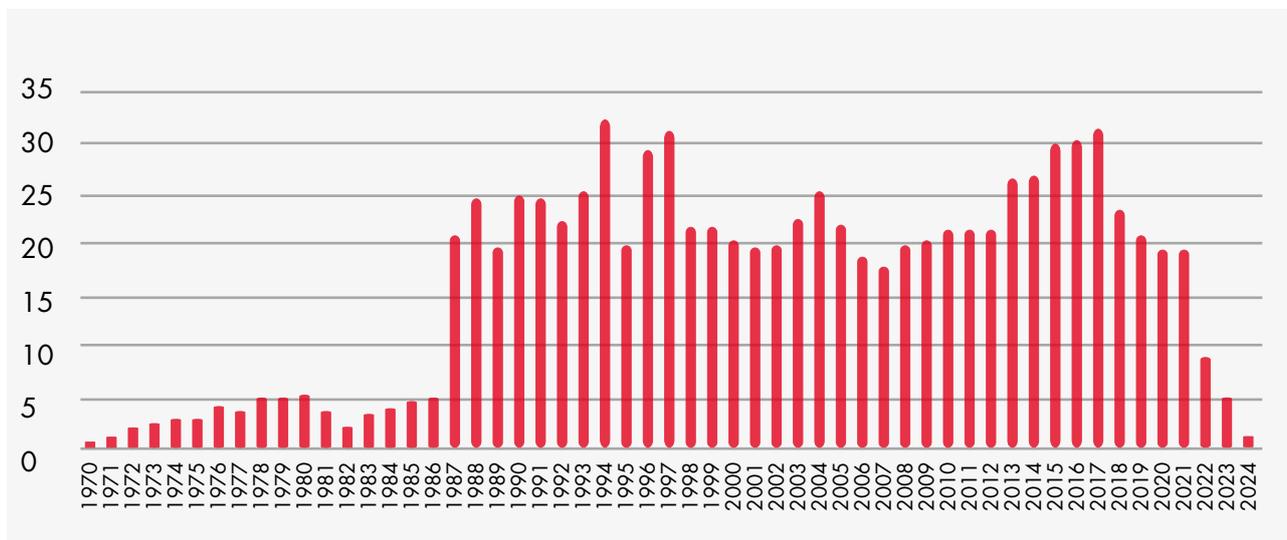
BEGINNING	END	ACRONYM	PROGRAMME
2014	2023	FSAC	Fondo Suizo de Apoyo a la Cultura Swiss Fund in Support of Culture



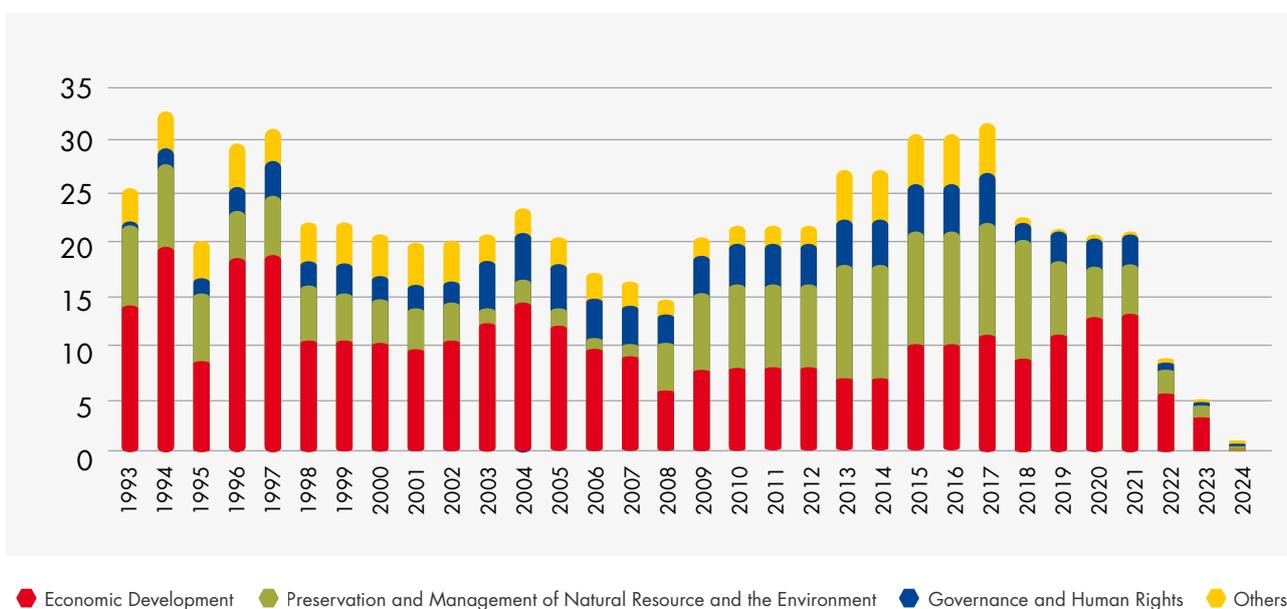
Young muralist. Photo: Swiss Fund in Support of Culture.

Financial contributions of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Bolivia

Financial contribution by year
(in millions of US dollars)



Financial contribution by field
(in millions of US dollars)



■ Economic Development
 ■ Preservation and Management of Natural Resource and the Environment
 ■ Governance and Human Rights
 ■ Others

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<https://web.archive.org>

a non-profit library with millions of versions of websites of past years, that can be accessed using the past URLs of the websites in its search function.



Digital booklet of the projects
executed by SDC over its 54 years

https://www.alexandria.ch/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=41BIG_INST:ALEX&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&tab=Everything&docid=alma9926647748801791



Legacies 54 years of Cooperation
by SDC over 54 years

https://www.alexandria.ch/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=41BIG_INST:ALEX&docid=alma9926678048101791



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