

FIGHTING POVERTY ... IN BOLIVIA

SEMILLAS DE BENDICIÓN

SINGLE MOM FINDS ACCEPTANCE, NEW LIFE THROUGH HER SAVINGS GROUP

At age 20, Sara Ortega became a single mother with the birth of her daughter, Valeria. With no where to go, she remained living with her parents in Tarija, but had to listen to negative and degrading comments from them as well as neighbors and others due to her unplanned pregnancy. This was all about to change the day Five Talents facilitators Sara and Eva visited her home and asked if she would like to join a savings group.

"I had doubts," she said. "But as an accountant, everyone wanted me to be treasurer of the group, and my parents really wanted me to do it, so I accepted the invitation." Sara recalls that the entire savings group process impressed her. "The money was administered by the members with so much transparency, and without realizing it, I was one of those who never missed a meeting because of my responsibilities and also because that group was becoming part of my life." Sara is now married and she has taken out her fourth loan for £15.

"My life has changed, thanks to my savings group," Sara said. "My sisters at Five Talents, Eva and Sara, helped me pray to accept Jesus Christ into my heart, I am happy now that He lives in me, and I put my joys and sorrows in His hands and I know that He will always take care of me and my family."



Sara Ortega

STATISTICS

SEMILLAS DE BENDICIÓN	
Number of Groups:	32
Number of Members:	279
Total Savings:	£1144
Average Savings Per Member:	£9

BOLIVIA

- Population: 9.2 million
- Population living below the national poverty line: 62.7%
- Population living on less than \$1 a day: 23%
- Number of physicians per 1,000 people: 1.2
- Rural population without access to proper sanitation facilities: 77%

WHERE WE WORK



Tarija

Semillas de Bendición, which means Seeds of Blessing, is based in the department of Tarija, in south central Bolivia. The groups that suffer the greatest levels of poverty and vulnerability in this rural area of Bolivia are indigenous communities, women and young people living in rural areas — these are the groups that this program targets. Women living in rural Bolivia attend school for an average of only 2.5 years, and there is limited access to credit and business skills training in the area.

The Anglican Diocese of Bolivia provides oversight to Semillas de Bendición and the Association of

Evangelical churches of Tarija is the implementing partner. Tarija is one of the fastest growing areas of churches in the diocese. Eva and Sara Mamani, co-facilitators, will continue to support this growth and provide outreach opportunities. Through this programme, Five Talents expects clients to gain the habits of saving and borrowing, as well as business skills, which will enable them to develop small businesses.

FIVE TALENTS NEEDS YOUR HELP

In 2010, Five Talents is raising £3,000 for Semillas de Bendición. Please consider a gift today.

