Overview

Bolivia is an origin, destination and transit point for trafficking in persons. The country’s indigenous groups, women and youth are particularly vulnerable to trafficking into forced labor or sexual exploitation. Despite approval of a national anti-trafficking plan in 2015, Bolivia faces significant challenges in combatting the problem. There is a severe lack of information and knowledge about the issue, particularly in rural, indigenous communities, and many trafficking crimes go unreported.

Objective

PADF recently launched a new project: Engaging Indigenous Women to Prevent and Counter Trafficking in Persons. The goal of the project is to empower indigenous communities and local authorities to prevent, investigate and respond to human trafficking violations in four municipalities in La Paz, Oruro, and Cochabamba departments. The project will also emphasize outreach to indigenous officials and the incorporation of indigenous systems into anti-trafficking efforts.

In partnership with Bolivian civil society organization Fundación Construir, PADF will train a team of rural indigenous women as Community Defenders (Defensoras Comunitarias) to educate, advocate, and coordinate anti-trafficking actions and encourage cooperation between government agencies. These women will be vital in reaching rural, underdeveloped communities where trafficking is a major problem.
Activities

Program activities will focus on underserved indigenous populations, recognizing the important role that rural community leaders, particularly indigenous women, can play as agents of change. The goal is to encourage local cooperation in the prevention of human trafficking and to provide assistance to victims and those at risk.

Activities include:

- Educate communities, at-risk populations and local officials about human trafficking through awareness campaigns, workshops and grassroots efforts
- Provide resources and assistance to victims of human trafficking
- Empower a team of rural indigenous women as “Community Defenders” to spearhead trafficking prevention, response, and advocacy efforts
- Share successes and lessons learned nationally

About PADF

The Pan American Development Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, brings together many stakeholders to improve livelihoods, empower communities, strengthen civil society, support human rights, protect the environment and respond to natural disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean. Established by the Organization of American States in 1962, PADF has worked in every country in the region. In the last decade, PADF has reached more than 92 million people, investing more than $600 million in development resources throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

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