



## Evaluation Report Fresh Food Voucher - ACF Santa Cruz, Bolivia



Humanitarian aid through emergency and recovery assistance for drought affected communities in the Chaco Region, Bolivia - Pilot Test: Fresh Food Vouchers

June 2011

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION



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## Abbreviations

ACH/ACF	Acción contra el Hambre/Action contre la Faim
APG	Asociación del Pueblo Guaraní
ASDI	Agencia Sueca de Desarrollo Internacional
CaLP	Cash Learning Partnership
COED	Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia Departamental
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale (ONG italiana)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of OECD)
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness Programme of the European Commission
ECHO	European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
MDRyT	Ministerio de Desarrollo Rural y Tierras
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDA	Programa de Desarrollo de Área (estrategia de Visión Mundial)
PISAE	Programa Integral de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional Gobierno Departamental, Santa Cruz
PMD-C	Programa Multisectorial Desnutrición Cero
SEDES	Servicio Departamental de Salud
SENAMHI	Servicio Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología
SMART	Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition
TOR	Terms of Reference
UCL	University College London
VIDECI	Viceministerio de Defensa Civil
WFP	United Nations World Food Program

## Executive Summary

This project is highly relevant within the context of recurrent adverse climate impacts on agricultural production and food security in rural areas, given that it strengthens food security during the period of project intervention.

There is thematic coherence and complementarity between the pilot study and government policies. However, complementarity in terms of a coordinated intervention with public and private sector stakeholders who intervene during emergency situations has not been given during the pilot study. Other institutions' knowledge of the pilot ACH voucher activity is limited and not free from criticism, though there is no assurance that these criticisms are specifically the result of the lack of information on this concept, the methodology and the project results.

The project has been fully implemented within the timeframe established for its completion. All vouchers were distributed and used according to plan. The degree of satisfaction with the project on behalf of the beneficiaries is high. The beneficiaries have used vouchers and fresh foods with high levels of responsibility.

The project benefits from efficient implementation in terms of management, with some weaknesses given the lack of a project manager. Compared to the cost per family per month regarding the distribution of food by the COED (WFP), the delivery of vouchers is cost efficient, with a lower monthly cost per household of about 15%.

The project design and implementation performance have reached satisfactory levels of effectiveness, since the main objectives were achieved (distribution of vouchers, improved nutritional status, gender empowerment). A necessary condition for this is an efficient management of the project structure based on appropriate amounts and frequencies of vouchers and selection of beneficiaries and traders. This assessment can only make minor comments regarding this issue.

This project has been implemented on the basis of two main assumptions; the responsible co-participation of beneficiaries and the interest of other stakeholders in the management of disasters or adverse situations. The assumption regarding the co-participation of beneficiaries has been met. The second assumption has yet to materialize and there are substantiated doubts that this will happen in future, judging by the first views expressed

by some key players, most of whom are unaware of the details and scope of the pilot study vouchers.

The expected results were achieved satisfactorily. There is an adequate level of use of indicators. All three targets in the logical framework of the project were fully achieved (and even exceeded).

The impact and degree of change achieved in a short implementation period of no more than three months is a positive surprise, but there are doubts about its sustainability.

We highlight three main results of the project that go beyond the emergency response to ensure access to food. It has additionally achieved a temporary nutritional improvement in children, new knowledge (regarding food & nutrition) and improvements in the conditions of gender empowerment. After three months of this pilot study, only the result of knowledge is sustainable. The nutritional results are already being lost and the improvements in gender empowerment are closely related to the presence of the vouchers and are at risk of declining after completion of the project.

There are limited possibilities for scaling up a voucher project in response to food emergencies in rural areas. One limitation is the necessary condition of physical access to market and the second is the reservation of other stakeholders regarding these projects as well as their institutional limitations for supporting or implementing the kind of management required for voucher projects, even if they were in total agreement.

## 1. Introduction

This report presents and discusses the results of a pilot study to deliver vouchers, which can be exchanged for fresh foods, to indigenous communities in rural areas of the Bolivian Chaco. This intervention is meant as an emergency measure as a result of the prolonged drought that had endangered the food security of poorer rural populations.

This intervention was carried out by the organization Action Against Hunger (ACH) between January and April 2010 and funded by ECHO and ASDI donors. The initiative to distribute vouchers rather than directly providing food was proposed by the CaLP (Cash Learning Partnership), an association of several international NGOs (ACH is one of the partners) with the purpose of generating empirical evidence and field experience of the benefits and disadvantages of a voucher system for food and the performance of this activity within different contexts.

This assessment was implemented from May 2011 (fieldwork), approximately three weeks after the completion of the pilot study. The evaluation is carried out by independent external evaluators, as requested by ACH. Its content forms part of a set of evaluations carried out by different evaluation teams for the CaLP and funded by ECHO..

## 2. Project background and context

### a. Background

On June 23, 2010, the Bolivian government issued the Supreme Decree No. 0560 declaring a national emergency in the Bolivian Chaco due to prolonged drought.

According to the official assessment led by the Vice Ministry of National Defence (VIDECI) and the Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT), 19,545 indigenous, vulnerable and subsistence farming families have been affected by the severe drought, resulting in the need of humanitarian aid to relieve the urgent needs and to restore their means of production and maintain food security. To confirm this, in early September 2010, the Bolivian Humanitarian Network<sup>1</sup> carried out a rapid assessment throughout the Chaco region, revealing an emergency situation and the need for immediate action. The National Service of Meteorology and Hydrology (SENAMHI) reported a deficit of rainfall in the Chaco area of approximately 60%, in line with data published by the Meteorological Hazards and Seasonal Forecasting group at the Benfield UCL<sup>2</sup> Hazard Research Centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Made up of representatives from the National Government, the United Nations and NGOs.

<sup>2</sup> University College London

In this context, the National Government established the Emergency Assistance Plan for Agriculture and Land Reclamation in the Chaco (2010-2012), with support from various international institutions, which began to take action to assist the affected families. Between March and November 2010, ACH gathered primary information at field level through exploration missions to proposed areas of intervention.<sup>3</sup> During these exploration missions, many stakeholders were interviewed by ACH.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Humanitarian Network, which carried out a field assessment in September 2010, the number of affected people reached 7618 families throughout 10 municipalities of the 16 that make up the Bolivian Chaco region. An assessment carried out by ACH, in coordination with the Civil Defence, WFP and departmental agencies in July 2010 stressed that agriculture, water and livestock were affected. This assessment showed that 78% of the population of 190 communities visited was affected. Crop losses of between 75 - 100% were observed in the communities belonging to the municipalities of Cuevo and Boyuibe.<sup>5</sup>

In response to this situation, during the second half of 2010, various public and private organizations began a series of activities in an attempt to prevent further deterioration of the situation. The spectrum of activities implemented includes access to water and food, including fresh food or access to these through vouchers and access to seeds.

ACH Bolivia presented two proposals to the emergency calls: ECHO and ASDI. Both were accepted. ACH implements its activity of response to the emergency situation under the framework of a joint program with FAO and COOPI entitled "Humanitarian aid through emergency assistance and recovery for communities affected by drought in the Chaco region of Bolivia."

The program aims to meet basic needs such as access to clean water and seeds for the recovery of production. It also includes an inter-institutional technical assistance plan for the promotion of sound agricultural practices and a risk management component to identify, control and prevent malnutrition in children under five years. ACH also carries out a SMART survey and implements, as a pilot experience, mechanisms to diversify household diets, through bio-fortified crops and vouchers for fresh food.

## **b. Project Description**

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<sup>3</sup> Assessment of the Drought in the Chaco Region. Santa Cruz, carried out by COED, ACH and PMA. May 2010. <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MUMA-8822CF?OpenDocument&rc=2&cc=bol> Humanitarian Network, Evaluation of response to drought. September 2010

<sup>4</sup> SEDES, PMA. First and third level hospitals. Municipalities and indigenous authorities.

<sup>5</sup> Assessment of the Drought in the Chaco Region. Santa Cruz, carried out by COED, ACH and PMA. <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MUMA-8822CF?OpenDocument&rc=2&cc=bol>

The initiative to distribute vouchers for fresh food is considered supplementary to the food basket distributed by COED/WFP. It is also hoped that this intervention would strengthen the results expected in terms of awareness regarding nutritional practices and healthy habits at home, as well as the installation of community vegetable gardens. All these activities could contribute towards reducing micronutrient deficiencies amongst the target population (strategic objective of the Zero Malnutrition Multisectoral Program (PMD-C)).

Since no experiences existed in emergency cash transfers in the Bolivian Chaco, ACH decided to implement a pilot study to generate operational capabilities to monitor and evaluate the performance of the mechanism itself, and its impact on the diet quality of the beneficiaries and possible changes in the levels of anaemia. ACH is considering expanding the implementation of the mechanism under the framework of possible future interventions of ACH, other humanitarian actors and the government in response to future emergencies in the Chaco region.

The main activity of the voucher project for fresh food is the distribution of vouchers to affected families, which may be exchanged in certain businesses for fresh foods (fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs and meat). Monthly amounts delivered per household vary between 150 Bs. (aprox 22 USD) and 250 Bs. (aprox 36 USD). per household per month, depending on the size and household composition.<sup>6</sup>

The activities were implemented as a pilot study for a period of three months. After this period of three months, the delivery of vouchers was suspended for further evaluation of the activity.

Apart from the vouchers, beneficiary households received training in the preparation of fresh food, healthy diet composition and management of vegetable gardens. Beneficiary communities have also worked with ACH specifically on issues regarding access to water and agricultural production (some also in vegetable garden management) since before the pilot study on vouchers for fresh food.

### 3. Evaluation Approach

#### a. Methods and Data Sources

According to the contract agreed with ACH, for the purpose of this External Evaluation, we implemented the results evaluation methodology for this pilot study.

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<sup>6</sup> Depending on the number of household members, the presence of children under 5 years and pregnant mothers or infants. In fact, three different amounts were allocated; 150 Bs., 230 Bs. and 250 Bs. per household per month.

The results of the project, under this approach, should be understood as the effect created by the products and services generated by the pilot study that help to move forward to the projects' stated objectives. The approach seeks to understand from a qualitative point of view just how important the ACH contribution is for the development trends and the food security of project beneficiaries.

The evaluation of results refers to the developmental changes resulting as a consequence of the products and services delivered by the project (the vouchers, and access through these to fresh food, and the training provided to beneficiaries). The main question of the evaluation is whether the products and services delivered have generated the expected results. According to the objectives set out in the logical framework of the project, it is expected that the access to fresh foods would generate the following results:

- access to food in emergency situations
- necessary element in reducing anaemia among children under five
- diversification of the family diet
- changes in eating habits
- gender empowerment

Information sources for this evaluation were in the form of individual interviews with the team at ACH in Santa Cruz and Camiri, other decision makers at regional and local authorities, meetings of focus groups with beneficiaries in three communities visited and document revision (see appendix).

#### **b. Evaluation criteria and specific questions**

A broad approach to basic evaluation criteria, proposed by OECD/DAC, was used for this evaluation. The proposed criteria for evaluation are:

- **Relevance:** the extent to which the project is justified in relation to the needs of beneficiaries and the environment policies.
- **Coherence/Complementarity:** between the project and existing public policies that impact food security, with a specific focus on humanitarian emergency responses.
- **Progress:** the progress towards the overall objectives of the project, such as whether beneficiaries have access and make use of project services and the degree of satisfaction generated by this use.
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which project objectives have been achieved.
- **Efficiency:** cost efficiency and time use in the transformation process of project resources into services and outcomes.
- **Assumptions.** The likelihood of assumptions to materialize.

- **Implementation:** achievement of planned results, compliance with budget, availability of baseline data, use of indicators.
- **Impact/Degree of change:** the intended and unintended impacts of the project expressed in changes generated as a result of interventions carried out by the project.
- **Sustainability:** the extent to which the project's positive effects may continue after project completion. What is the possibility that the positive effects of the project will last?

#### 4. Scope and limitations of the evaluation

The pilot project was implemented in the following six indigenous communities:

Table 1: Geographic range of the pilot study

Municipality	Communities
Camiri	Imbochi y Pipiituyuro
Gutiérrez	Itaimbeguasú y Kaasapa
Lagunillas	El Tunal y Pozo Potrerillos

Source: ACH

ECHO has financed the intervention in three of the communities, while ASDI has financed the intervention in the other three communities. The intervention was implemented in a consistent and identical manner across all six communities.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the communities of Pipiituyuro, Itaimbeguasú and Pozo Potrerillos were selected for field visits and focal group meetings with beneficiaries.<sup>7</sup>

Field work (community visits and focal group meetings) was carried out between 25 - 27 May 2011, while the individual interviews were carried out between May 20 and June 10 2011.

The focus group discussions were carried out with separate groups of men and women. The discussion with male beneficiaries was facilitated by Thomas Otter, while the discussion with women beneficiaries was facilitated by Monica Cortez.<sup>8</sup>

The extent of the project covered by funding from ECHO:

<sup>7</sup> The call for attendance to the meetings with external evaluation was carried out in all six communities and with the presence of the respective local authorities (in the town hall). The three communities selected were based on meeting the following requirements: simultaneous availability (to attend the evaluators) of the beneficiaries, the community leader (indigenous groups) and the local authority (mayor). The inability of three communities to be available (mostly due to absence of authorities) can be understood as a random factor in the selection of the communities visited. Another community selection criterion applied was the possibility of visiting three communities from three different municipalities.

<sup>8</sup> During field visits, we count on the support of translators so that beneficiaries can express themselves freely in their native language.

**Table 2: Characterization of the vouchers for fresh food pilot study**

Administrative Structures	
Number of communities engaged	3
Number of municipalities engaged	3
Number of markets engaged	3
Beneficiaries	
Number of households	96
Number of persons	518
Pregnant women	8
Lactating women	32
Children under 5 years	76
School-aged children	187
Women as voucher recipients	88
Distribution of vouchers by amount	
250 Bs. per month per household	60%
230 Bs. per month per household	29%
150 Bs. per month per household	11%

Source: ACH Mid-Term Report to ECHO

## 5. Results

The results are presented in groups according to the evaluation criteria presented above. To facilitate the reading and understanding, we repeat the definition of the criteria. For each criterion, we have added the specific questions from the terms of reference which should be answered by this evaluation.<sup>9</sup>

- **Relevance:** the extent to which the project is justified in relation to the needs of beneficiaries and the existing environmental policies.
  - Needs assessment;
  - Food security and Nutritional situation;
  - Did the intervention address the needs of the population and the context?

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<sup>9</sup> The results refer to all the specific questions included in the Terms of Reference. However, some questions within this text are not in the same place as in the ToRs. Several questions were relocated by the authors of this assessment to a different assessment criterion, if considered necessary. In addition, to facilitate the understanding of the results presentation, findings regarding the sustainability of the project and concerning the potential of scaling up, are presented together.

The project is highly relevant in the context of recurrent adverse climate impacts on agricultural production and food security in rural areas, given that it strengthens food security during the period of project intervention.

As a key player and stakeholder in issues regarding food safety and adverse climate risk management for over three years in the intervention region, ACH Bolivia has a detailed knowledge of the food situation in the potential beneficiary communities. This knowledge was acquired and complemented in 2010 with specific monitoring activities on the impact of the crisis which has been spreading since late 2009 (see chapter 2.a) justifying the need for intervention on behalf of communities.

At the time of coordinating the complementary interventions between the departmental authorities (the government of Santa Cruz which acts as the operational arm/logistics of the WFP interventions), national authorities (Civil Defence), the WFP and ACH, there was a general consensus on the reality of the prolonged crisis situation, which became exacerbated towards the end of 2010 by the ongoing shortage of rain, but there was no consensus among all stakeholders whether the adverse effects of drought were strong enough to warrant a distribution of food. Hence, an intervention in the area and at the right time for action was highly relevant, but the stakeholders did not reach a clear consensus about the best type of intervention.

Once the activity started in target communities, ACH developed a baseline statistical dataset of the target population. This baseline clearly shows that the communities suffer permanent food shortages (81% of children under 5 years suffered from anaemia before the start of the voucher project) and climate emergencies severely affect household food security, given that an average of 39% of food consumption comes from their own production. In adverse weather situations, households do not have the means to increase their consumption of purchased foods, given that in the absence of adverse weather conditions they will spend more than 80% of their cash income on purchasing food (and 61% of this food does not come from their own production). In times of drought the availability of subsistence food and cash income is consequently reduced, and the main survival strategy is simply to reduce consumption (both in variety and quantity), with adverse consequences in terms of health: 80% of children under 5 years suffering from anaemia, 44% of lactating mothers suffering from anaemia, and 8% of children suffering from malnutrition.

An assessment prepared under the framework of the 2010-2011 Emergency Response Plan for Humanitarian and Agricultural Emergency resulting from Drought in the Bolivian Chaco, stresses that in terms of food safety, the number of daily meals in the Chaco region of Tarija<sup>10</sup> dropped from an average of 3 to 2.4 during the May-June-July 2010 period, coinciding with a period of drought. The document also confirms the increased need for food for the short term.

- **Coherence/Complementarity:** between the project and existing public policies that ensure food security.
  - Implications on the work of other entities, unintended consequences, both externally and internally

There is a thematic coherence and complementarity between the pilot study and government policies. However, a situation of complementarity in terms of coordinated intervention with stakeholders from the public and private sectors involved in emergency situations has not been given during the pilot study. The knowledge of other institutions regarding the ACH voucher pilot activity is limited and not without criticism, though there is no assurance that such criticisms are precisely the product of the lack of information of the concept, methodology and results of the project.

The Emergency Response Plan<sup>11</sup> issued by the National Government under the framework of the Supreme Decree 0560 of National Emergency declaration, sets out the general objective of "developing humanitarian and agricultural emergency actions in the region of the 16 municipalities that make up the Bolivian Chaco with the purpose of reducing the adverse effects caused by drought. This objective is broken down into three levels, one of which (the humanitarian) provides attention to the food needs of the affected families. In this context, there is coherence between Vouchers for Food pilot project and Public Policies issued in the context of attention to the problems of drought, both in the approach (food aid) and the intervention area (Camiri, Lagunillas and Gutierrez, Santa Cruz department).

The Plan also provides for the support and coordination of humanitarian organizations as well as international cooperation, but does not specify features or the extent of such participation.

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<sup>10</sup> Geographical area near the target area of the voucher pilot study, with very similar geographic and climatic characteristics.

<sup>11</sup> Humanitarian and Agricultural Emergency Attention Plan for Drought 2010-2011 in the Bolivian Chaco. Condarde Technical Committee. Plurinational State of Bolivia.

A wide range of stakeholders exist in the field of food security within the region where the pilot project intervened:

- *Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia Departamental* (COED), Government of Santa Cruz de la Sierra: carries out a plan of their activities up to the municipal level.
- *Programa Integral de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional* (PISAE), Departmental Government of Santa Cruz: serves as the operational arm of the WFP when there is a need to distribute food.
- Civil Defence (Vice Ministry): constrained by its institutional structure (administrative bureaucracy) and a very limited resource availability for field interventions.
- World Food Program (WFP): responds with a national policy approach, rather than at a departmental level.
- World Vision/PDA (NGO): has an independent, yet coordinated approach with COED during their interventions.
- Red Cross: engages in humanitarian intervention, in close coordination with COED.
- Congregation of the Guarani People (APG): coordinates its interventions (production support) with the municipal governments.

Despite the existence of multiple stakeholders, there is a general feeling that none of these have the sole capacity to carry out a prolonged intervention, or at larger scale. However, it is unclear whether this limitation is a result of inter-institutional coordination failures or due to the size or scale of the social problems caused by climatic disasters (number of people affected, severity of drought or flood, etc).

In the case of the WFP, the institution implemented contingency measures through the provision of food in exchange for work. Under this scheme, the communities are actively involved in seeking solutions to their most pressing problems, with the clear intention of building capacity for future self-management. The WFP has the PISAE as its operational working body, responsible for the logistics of food distribution. For every intervention, it seeks the support of partners such as municipalities and captaincies to help support the non-food components. The WFP sees ACH as an efficient key player in the implementation of their work, though it admits not being very aware of the food vouchers pilot project recently carried out.

The PISAE, as already mentioned above, is the operational body for the humanitarian aid actions of the WFP. During the drought, this organization carried out the distribution of dry foods (flour, corn, beans, oil and salt) in 6 of the 7 municipalities of the Chaco, in the form of food for nutrition and health checks. Distributions are carried out twice a month, and it is currently in the midst of its third distribution. Likewise, it is also implementing a plan with WFP to distribute food under the concept of food for work, with the intention of not creating a dependency, but rather be purely implementing welfare policies.

The *Centro de Operaciones de Emergencias Departamental* (COED), of the Government of the Santa Cruz Department, also carries out food aid operations through the delivery of food with the support of local institutions (municipalities). The COED believes that, while there is a range of stakeholders working under the same cause, there is a need for greater synergy between their actions so as to achieve efficient, and not only effective, results in their interventions. Their relationship with ACH is not a direct one, but it is healthy in the sense that the NGO is considered one of the most efficient in the area.

The Congregation of the Guarani People (APG) is the natural representative organization of the Guarani communities that inhabit the Bolivian Chaco; this institution works in collaboration with national government agencies. Their position regarding the work of ACH has been one of great criticism: not only do they question the decision of ACH of working directly with communities, without the intervention or participation of the APG, but also the overall focus of the food vouchers pilot project in terms of the absence of conditionality.

As mentioned earlier, although there is a wide variety of institutions, and all converge on the same subject, there is a general impression that none of these has the single capacity for prolonged or large-scale intervention. This perception is has been construed from interviews carried out with some key institutions (WFP, COED, PISAE, Municipalities) which highlight the limitations of fully addressing the problem.

For the specific case of the Food Vouchers project, interviews with key institutions reveal a mostly generic understanding of this initiative, barely limited to the knowledge that ACH has implemented a pilot project. The representative of the Municipality of Lagunillas has revealed a much greater understanding of the project, although remains very critical. However, in general, this assessment has perceived that the institutions consulted

consider that the distribution of vouchers is useful as a complementary activity to the customary direct distribution of food during a drought emergency; but they do not see it as an independent activity or sufficient in itself. It is worth reiterating that this perception may be due to a general lack of awareness and information on the project, though we cannot guarantee that this is indeed the real reason.

Faced with this assessment, ACH mentioned that they had intentionally not yet promoted the voucher distribution approach, precisely because they have been waiting for the results of this evaluation.

One detail worth mentioning is the perception of the APG on the project: in addition to noting a general lack of understanding regarding the ACH initiative, they showed a highly critical view on the concept of intervention, as well as the overall design and implementation process. The institution literally alleges that "ACH has entered through the window, rather than through the door. ACH has entered the area directly, rather than through the APG. The main problem for us is that sometimes ACH takes on attributes on behalf of the Guarani people." The APG has also questioned the line of action, in spite of having clarified that this was a pilot project designed to address situations of food emergency. "We do not agree with these projects (...) they cause problems. It is best that they are not implemented. There are other solutions, and there are other more important needs such as the issue of water access for the nurseries. We have no water and this is the reason we are unable to produce" expressed the organization. In the opinion of this evaluation, perhaps the lack of information was extremely sensitive to the APG, whose people regard communication in a much more acute and sensitive manner than other cultures, particularly when strong historical claims of decolonization are being promoted. ACH must additionally analyze whether the context in which the project was carried out and the quality of their relationship (before the project) with the APG have been decisive factors in the extremely critical appraisal of the vouchers project.

- **Progress:** the progress towards the general objectives of the project, such as whether beneficiaries have access and make use of project services and the degree of satisfaction generated by this use.
  - Use of vouchers;
  - Has there been a process of consultation with beneficiaries regarding priorities?
  - Level of participation of stakeholders in the design, implementation, and monitoring?
  - Degree of beneficiary satisfaction with the project?

The project has been fully implemented within the implementation timeframe. All vouchers were distributed and used according to plan. The degree of satisfaction with the Project on behalf of the beneficiaries is high. The beneficiaries have used vouchers and fresh foods with high degree of responsibility.

### *Progress*

Beneficiaries mentioned having been consulted about their priorities before the start of the project, making reference to visits carried out by ACH staff. During these visits, the rationale and process of the intervention would be explained. These visits were also opportunities for creating awareness and training beneficiaries through the use of an information leaflet explaining the contents of the project (see the Appendix).

The beneficiaries mentioned that their food priorities in times of crisis are more focused on the lack of staple foods (rice, corn, flour, salt, cooking oil). Due to its nature, the vouchers do not cover these needs. Interviewed beneficiaries understand and know the logic behind the vouchers in terms of their capacity as a complement to the basic food packages which should have been distributed by WFP through PISAE. In each of the communities visited (just as in the other three communities in the pilot study), there has not been a single case of this complementarity, since the basic food packages from the WFP were only distributed once, and this was towards the end of last year.<sup>12</sup>

The beneficiaries have not participated in the project design, but have been involved in its adjustment. At the request of the beneficiaries, the monetary values of the vouchers was changed (which were originally issued at a value of 1 Bs. and 5 Bs.) and the design of the vouchers was modified, making its value more visible (with larger font).

The beneficiaries are an integral part of the project implementation because it is up to them to make proper use of the vouchers, beginning with the care of the vouchers (not to lose them nor dirty them), their correct usage (purchase of products as defined) and the storage, preparation and consumption of fresh foods. In all these ways the project support and

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<sup>12</sup> Although beneficiaries from the three communities visited claim to have received food from the WFP (distributed via the PISAE, which is part of COED) only once at the end of last year, the PISAE notes that food distribution is still valid, only that after the first delivery (in late 2010) it was decided that food should be distributed every two months, rather than once a month. The third instalment is due to take place in July 2011. According to the understanding of this assessment, both sets of information are correct. While the distribution of food has not been formally cancelled, the fact remains that there was a period of more than two months in which no food was distributed and this period happened to coincide with the implementation of the vouchers pilot study.

accountability in the management of vouchers by the beneficiaries has exceeded expectations.

All vouchers have been redeemed. The voucher traders make reference to a single case where a beneficiary had lost his vouchers (from a previous month), but was able to find it again and redeem this even after its expiration date (with explicit authorization ACH). Traders also mention that the vast majority of vouchers traded are typically in perfect condition. This shows the care that the beneficiaries give for these papers.

### *Degree of satisfaction*

The Food Vouchers pilot project has enjoyed very good views from its beneficiaries. This high level of satisfaction is due to a number of reasons:

- i) the incorporation of fruits and vegetables into the community's diet and, while admitting that such items have traditionally been alien to their eating habits, the recognition that these provide nutritional benefits to members of the community;
- ii) the organization of the delivery system and exchange of vouchers has also been successful in spite of an additional expense for transport to buy the groceries;
- iii) the decision to have access to a variety of products has also generated considerable satisfaction because it allows them to select and try out new products for the children of the community who have been most enthusiastic with the addition of fruits, particularly, as well as yogurt and cheese. This possibility of having a variety of products, and freedom of choice even if conditioned to a short list, makes recipients reject the option to receive food directly through ACH or other organizations. "We know what we need and what our children like most, we like to try new products, and we know just how much we should take so that it will not rot," claims one of the beneficiaries and states that they do not have the liberty to choose if the emergency aid consists of delivering non-fresh foods.

Overall, the focus groups revealed that the vouchers project was of great satisfaction for the beneficiaries, not only because it gave them the chance to diversify their diet but also because, for the most part, the trading system works well.

Although for the most part the beneficiaries expressed satisfaction with the selection of trading merchants, they also highlighted their concern regarding the attitude of some suppliers who would sell products of inferior quality -"selected" to quote the beneficiaries- but at the same price as a product of excellent quality. There were complaints about this issue in two of the three communities visited, mainly because traders would not allow the freedom to choose food of better quality.

Regarding the cost of transport to reach the selected suppliers, communities indicated that they pay an average of 30 Bolivianos per trip.<sup>13</sup> An additional 10 Bs. is spent on lunch as market outings are usually accompanied with their children, thus resulting in extra costs. Some recipients admitted that they not always had the money available to travel to the outlets; however, although this transport cost is significantly important to the family economy, they consider it "worthwhile" due to the multiplier effect of the activity: deciding what to buy, diversifying the diet and improving the health of their children.

- **Efficiency:** the cost efficiency and time use in the processing of project resources into services and outcomes.
  - Distribution of vouchers;
  - Selection of monitoring indicators and tools;
  - Adaptation and timely program response;
  - Response times of personnel to the program needs and to address the problems;
  - Distribution costs, voucher costs, and the costs of awareness and education on diet diversification

The project benefits from an efficient implementation in terms of management, with some weaknesses given the absence of a project manager. Compared to the cost per family per month of food distribution by the COED (WFP), the delivery of vouchers is cost efficient with a lower monthly cost of about 15% per household.

Table 3 shows that the COED distributes a food package worth 300 Bolivianos at a total cost of 470 Bolivianos, including purchase costs, storage, distribution and supervision (see also Table A1 in Appendix).

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<sup>13</sup> The three communities visited are in rural areas, many kilometres from the paved road that leads to the nearest urban areas where the businesses in which the ACH vouchers can be redeemed are located. However, all are connected by public transport at least once a day. The minimum distances to the next urban area/market-dealer for ACH vouchers system for the communities are: Itaembeguasu - 45 km; Pipi Itoyoro - 26 km; Pozo Postrerillos - 40 km.

**Table 3: Operational cost for emergency food care PISAE/COED Santa Cruz (Average unit costs for one ration per family per month; data from June 2011)**

Food	Price (Bs)	Units (Kg)	Price (Bs/Kg)	Ration 1 month (Kg/family)	Cost/ Ration (Bs)
<b>Total cost of the operation (Ration/family/month)</b>					<b>470.78</b>
<b>Total Ration/family/month</b>				<b>57.98</b>	<b>300.72</b>
<b>Total Ration/family/month</b>				<b>1.93</b>	<b>10.02</b>
Rice	240	46	5.22	1.00	5.22
Flour	205	45	4.56	0.50	2.28
Beans	250	46	5.43	0.25	1.36
Oil	10.5	0.828	12.68	0.08	1.05
Salt	1.2	1	1.20	0.10	0.12
<b>Storage per ration</b>					<b>98.08</b>
Storage personnel (Bs/Kg)			1.63	57.98	94.63
Storage operational cost (Bs/Kg)			0.06	57.98	3.45
<b>Transport per ration</b>					<b>48.19</b>
Ration haulage	0.9	46	0.9	57.98	1.13
Average Transport	5500	10000	0.55	57.98	31.89
<b>Distribution (3 day operation)</b>					<b>10.11</b>
Distribution personnel (Bs/3 persons)	871.87	10000	0.09	57.98	5.06
Personnel expenses	873.00	10000	0.09	57.98	5.06
<b>Supervision per ration</b>					<b>13.68</b>
Supervision personnel (Bs/3 persons)	1300.00	10000	0.13	57.98	7.54
Fuel per operation	187	10000	0.02	57.98	1.08
Expenses per operation	873	10000	0.09	57.98	5.06

Source: COED; the calculation bases for this table are in Table A1 in the Appendix.

**Table 4: Operating costs of the ACH vouchers system per family per month<sup>14</sup>**

	With the real voucher value (Bs.)	With the hypothetical voucher value (Bs.)
<b>Average voucher value per family per month</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>300</b>

<sup>14</sup> Operating cost estimates are based on the following: the implementation of the voucher project requires 5 of the institution's staff, with different levels of workload; two people in Santa Cruz spend 30% of their time on the project, one person in Camiri is devoted full-time to the project, another person in Camiri devotes 50% of their time to the project and a third person in Camiri who devotes 20% of their time to the project. When converting these percentages into (man) workdays, the total workload is of 51 days per month. We applied an average salary of 361 Bs. per day to this result, which is the average salary of COED officials that implement the food distribution. Although in reality ACH salaries are different, we have chosen to apply the comparable salary in this calculation, to avoid possible differences in the final comparison of the costs due to wage differences rather than operational differences. Bearing in mind that this operating cost covers six communities, we have incorporated only 50% of this cost, to estimate the unit cost for each of the three communities visited during this evaluation. In order to calculate the cost of travel, we estimated a need for two visits per month (one for the distribution of vouchers and another for monitoring) per community. By incorporating the distances between communities and Camiri (two visits per month mean a total distance of 804 kilometers) in a vehicle that uses 12 liters per 100 kilometers at a cost of 5 Bs. per liter, we can work out the travel costs at 482 Bs. per month.

Total cost of vouchers for 96 families	23,040	28,800
Administrative cost per month (3 communities)	9,206	9,206
Travel costs per month (only fuel)	482	482
Overall total cost	32,728	38,488
Cost per family per month	341	401

Source: Prepared on the basis of information provided by ACH

Table 4 shows that during the pilot study, ACH was able to operate at a cost of 341 Bolivianos per family to cover the average food cost of 240 Bolivianos per household per month. Given that the operating costs of a voucher project do not increase at the time that the value of the voucher increases, the total monthly cost per family per month to distribute an equivalent of 300 Bolivianos (amount comparable to the value of food delivered by the COED) comes to 401 Bolivianos, resulting in the vouchers operation 15% cheaper compared to the distribution of food.

It is important to see that there is also a cost of access to fresh food, which the household takes on when paying the monthly cost of transport from the home to shops. Beneficiaries mentioned that they visited the stores twice a month, since they have no means of properly storing fresh food at home. The average transport cost borne by each household comes to 50 Bolivianos. We do not include these costs in the calculations above, because they are not borne by the project. However, if the total of all costs is to be known, regardless of who covers what, these travel costs can simply be added together (since the delivery of food by the COED is carried out at home). By applying this concept, the total cost of delivering a voucher for 300 Bs. per month per household, and its conversion to food reaches 450 Bolivianos, versus the 470 Bolivianos it costs the COED, including household delivery of food worth 300 Bolivianos.

The bonds were delivered to the beneficiary families at the end of each month (to be redeemed the following month). ACH has implemented a structured monitoring of beneficiaries and providers, using specially developed questionnaires for the pilot project. In addition, ACH has implemented a qualitative monitoring process (of ongoing visits to communities and discussions with beneficiaries as well as with vendors) carried out by the technical team of ACH.

This evaluation, nevertheless, considers the fact of not having had a project manager a structural weakness of the project. The management of projects by managers is common practice in ACH Bolivia. However, given the short

period of time and the reduced availability of resources, the decision was made to not spend resources on a manager. While the overall efficiency of the project has not suffered from this, there have been some delays, such as the implementation of the monitoring forms which were already designed, and which could have been avoided with a specific management.

On a more positive note, we can highlight the capacity for rapid response to emergency situations, such as the case of change in denomination of the vouchers, the inclusion of additional sellers/traders (Gutiérrez case), the exclusion of traders with inadequate performance (Lagunillas case), the inclusion of additional beneficiaries (absent on the census day for the selection of beneficiary households in each community), the flexibility of self-management of the beneficiaries (the community of Itaembeguasu negotiated directly with one of the reputable traders the possibility of reaching the community with a truckload of products, thus avoiding transport costs incurred by the beneficiaries).<sup>15</sup>

At the beginning of the project, traders had to travel to Camiri in order to settle accounts and cash their vouchers (paid by check), but in practice it became evident that you cannot cover the entire process in such a short time (the recounting of vouchers and everyone coming at the same time, all only within a few days). Consequently, ACH offered the collection of bonds from the shops as an additional customer service.

- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which project objectives have been achieved.
  - Market assessment, value of the grants and frequency, comparison between the direct transfer of cash vs. distributions in kind vs. vouchers;
  - Conditionality (absence of);
  - Selection process of beneficiaries;
  - Level of community involvement;
  - Pro-activity in the exchange with stakeholders and willingness to answer questions from stakeholders;
  - Adequate follow-up of financial procedures;

**The project design and implementation performance have reached satisfactory levels of effectiveness, taking into consideration that the main objectives were achieved (distribution of vouchers, improved nutritional status, gender empowerment). A necessary condition for this**

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<sup>15</sup> In the opinion of this assessment, this negotiation is the product of two events. Firstly, the Itaembeguasu community is well organized and has a more united population (compared with the other two communities visited) and second, the trader Rodriguez is known in the community and on previous occasions has transported goods to the community with a truck.

has been the efficient management of the project structure based on appropriate amounts and frequencies of vouchers and the selection of beneficiaries and traders, of which only minor comments can be made by this assessment.

#### *The Voucher*

The value of vouchers and their distribution by food type was established according to a fixed amount of food (by food type) that meets the minimum requirements for a family of six members. Table 5 below shows the food types, the percentage of the voucher designated for these and the amounts corresponding to each of the three amounts of vouchers used for the pilot (150, 230 and 250 Bs., according to the number of people per household and presence of children under five years, pregnant women and lactating mothers).

Table 5: DIVISION OF VOUCHERS INTO PERCENTAGES (%)					
Food types	Amounts based on requirements (*)	Bs. 250 Voucher	Bs. 230 Voucher	Bs. 150 Voucher	Percentage of the Voucher value
Meat and Dairy	2 litres of milk or yoghurt or 1 medium cheese/week	107	99	64	43%
	5 kilos of meat/month				
	48 eggs/month				
Green and Yellow Vegetables (seasonal)	5 bundles of chard/month	53	48	32	21%
	3 bundles of celery/month				
	2 kilos of beetroot/month				
	4 kilos of tomatoes/month				
	30 onions/month				
	6.5 kilos of carrots/month				
8 pumpkins/month					
Fruits (seasonal)	8 dozen bananas/month	90	83	54	36%
	8 medium units of papaya/month				
	4 medium units of watermelon/month				
	4 dozen medium lemons/month				

(\*) Food quantities were determined based on a sum of Bs. 470 per month. The percentage distribution of bonds by food type eventually also applied to the small final amount of the vouchers.

Source: ACH

The value of the voucher was rated as low by the participants. They nevertheless believe that the voucher does represent a help, but that in times of severe crisis (although this was indeed a crisis, it was not considered severe) the voucher amount would be insufficient.

The baseline report indicates that the average amount of money spent per household on food comes to 311 Bs. (for an inadequate and incomplete diet). ACH has estimated that 470 Bs. per household would be the appropriate value, even taking into account that only 60% of household consumption has to be purchased. Following this line of reasoning, a provision of about 300 Bs. from the household's own funds added to the 233 Bs. (average value) of the voucher exceeds the estimated requirement of 470 Bs. The logic behind emergency interventions considers for a short period that the beneficiaries have no capacity to access food through their own efforts. While the WFP had agreed to provide dry foods, to ensure basic food supplies which would then be supplemented by the Vouchers project,

ACH would need to discuss with the WFP and its operational arm, the PISAE, as to whether the measure achieved adequate coordination, taking into consideration that according to the PISAE the deliveries are made every two months and, at the time of this evaluation, are only just carrying out the third and final delivery destined to mitigating the effects of the drought.

The nutritional results obtained (see below) confirm that this amount, although considered low by the beneficiaries, it is enough to make a difference and create rapid improvements in health status.

Regarding the variety of products offered through the Vouchers, overall the communities have shown a high degree of satisfaction, both in terms of the possibility of accessing familiar vegetables and fruits (such as onions and tomatoes) which are highly desirable for them and for the opportunity to access new products (greens, grapes, peaches, yogurt), which have been a great success particularly amongst the children. Nevertheless, it seems that 'potatoes' would have been the product of choice in terms of access through the vouchers, as well as any other non-perishable goods (such as sugar, flour and oil), including several others provided by other cooperating initiatives (WFP) . There occasionally seems to be a lack of awareness that these interventions were designed to only cover contingency situations.

#### *Selection of beneficiaries*

The beneficiaries were selected on the basis of two criteria: previous work experience of some of these with ACH, proximity of the community to market centres. At the beneficiary level, there was no objection regarding the criteria used for selecting the communities, although in two of the three communities visited (Pipiituyuro and Pozos Potrerillos) it was reported that two families (one from each community) had been excluded from the project despite having children. However, in both cases, the mothers who did not receive the voucher shared the same household of a relative (mother-daughter, in both cases) who was benefiting from the vouchers. Nevertheless, there was an overall satisfaction of beneficiaries regarding the selection criteria implemented.

The main criticism and questioning, regarding the communities targeted and the process of conceiving, designing and implementing the project, came from the Congregation of the Guarani People (APG).

This scepticism is due to a perceived lack of coordination between ACH and APG regarding the implementation of the project. "All we heard during the visit of ACH was more like a brainstorm of what to do as a result of the

drought. This was never part of the project, that we were informed on the design," stated the APG. This organization alleges that some communities with greater food shortage issues were excluded in exchange for others who were better able to cope with drought situations. They also object the apparent lack of consultation, communication and coordination with the APG to define the project, as well as the absence of conditionality. This organization also claims to have received questioning from other communities, specifically regarding the selection criteria for the participants in the pilot study. "I have had issues with these vouchers because they were a problem for me; I knew nothing about how they (the communities) were selected (...). I want the organizational structure of the Guarani people to be respected" states the representative of the APG, who also claims to have heard rumours of the sale of vouchers<sup>16</sup> by some beneficiaries, but admits having no proof of this.

### *Selection of traders*

The traders were selected based on location (easy access), food quality and the ability to provide numbers. The selection seems adequate, but this did not prevent minor problems in the use of vouchers, such as restrictions in terms of freedom to select vegetables and fruit from one of the accredited traders, or the (occasional) lack of provision of some products, or the price of food products, which for many beneficiaries was high in relation to their quality and price against other competitors in the Camiri market, specifically. These comments were openly raised in two of the three communities visited during this assessment.<sup>17</sup> Table 6 below shows how the vast majority of vouchers (3/4) are redeemed within the first fortnight, regardless of the place of purchase (location of the beneficiary community) the date (month) or the type of food purchased.

**Table 6: Circulation rates of the vouchers**

	First fortnight	Second fortnight	First fortnight	Second fortnight
	Bs.		%	
Total	110.104	31.570	77,7	22,3
Gutiérrez	12.771	13.327	48,9	51,1
Lagunillas	31.874	5.747	84,7	15,3
Camiri	65.459	12.496	84,0	16,0
Derivatives of animal products, fruits and vegetables	28.038	14.557	65,8	34,2

<sup>16</sup> During a trip of APG representatives to an indigenous community, the driver mentioned that the beneficiaries of these vouchers were selling them to others - to who is not known - in exchange for money to buy sugar.

<sup>17</sup> Certain discontent with the prices and quality of products, even motivated the women of the Pipiituyuro community who participated in the evaluation, to propose the change of one of the traders.

Carnes	13.425	3.177	80,9	19,1
Vegetables and Fruits	55.247	11.196	83,1	16,9
Dairy	13.394	2.640	83,5	16,5
January	13.636	10.064	57,5	42,5
February	40.241	6.492	86,1	13,9
March	36.562	11.925	75,4	24,6
April	19.665	3.089	86,4	13,6

Source: Base on data from ACH; see appendix for more details.

The amount of money spent by each household for each item is determined by amount in vouchers by type of product they receive. Each month the beneficiaries have redeemed all of their bonds, but with a significant concentration in the first fortnight of each month, which confirms the situation of need in which these households live.

During the three months of implementation there have been no major changes in the concentration of customers by supplier (with the exception of February in which there was a higher concentration in Camiri), indicating that the project has worked on an appropriate geographical basis of suppliers.

Table 7: Commercial movement by provider (Bs.)

	Mendoza	Rodríguez	Molo	Benavides	Heredia	Zambrana	Borja	Salas	
January	8,569								Gutiérrez
February	2,865	5,896							
March	446	8,322							
Sub-Total	11,880	14,218							
January			4,552	3,557					Lagunillas
February			6,329	4,973					
March			7,927	5,073					
April			2,316	2,894					
Sub-Total			21,124	16,497					
January					1,521	961	3,228		Camiri
February					5,247	4,245	15,480	1,312	
March					5,503	3,672	14,841	1,698	
April					3,763	2,011	11,770	2,703	
Sub-Total					16,034	10,889	45,319	5,713	
Grand Total	11,880	14,218	21,124	16,497	16,034	10,889	45,319	5,713	

Source: Base on data from ACH; see appendix for more details.

Table 7 shows that providers in Gutierrez are generalists and competed initially; in the end, however, it was the trader Rodriguez who earned the business as a result of providing better service (see above, provision of goods in the community). In Lagunillas, providers are complementary and share the business. In Camiri, there was a clear concentration of trade with the fruit and vegetables trader (with 60% of the turnover in Camiri).<sup>18</sup>

For the purpose of the evaluation, interviews were carried out with three of the eight certified traders: a supplier of meat, milk, yogurt and others who's trade stand is located one block from the main square of Lagunillas; the second is a supplier of a variety of fruit and vegetables in a stall in the municipal market of Camiri, and the third was with the trader Rodriguez from Gutiérrez. The three traders showed great satisfaction with the experience, and said it was good business for them to work with ACH because they gain new customers with monthly volumes of transactions between 4,000 Bs. and 15,000 Bs. and with guaranteed payment. Indeed, regarding the payment system, traders were highly disconcerted with the idea of the project being implemented by a public institution, no matter at what level (municipal, provincial, national). Only the trader from Gutierrez expressed a willingness to give this option a chance. During the project period, the interviewed traders were forced to reorganize their business as a result of the increased demand, which in one case, induced the hiring of temporary staff (family) and in another case, a more diversified range of products. For the most part, traders agreed that they initially experienced some difficulties dealing with the beneficiaries - because of language, supply shortages - but that throughout the development of the project they were able to successfully cope with the task.

Regarding the contract with ACH, they claimed to have met the requirements as to provide only the list of products authorized by ACH, despite the repeated requests of the beneficiaries to provide other non-perishable products such as flour, oil, pastas, sugar and salt. Apparently, this difficulty was related to an incomplete provision of food by the WFP under their drought aid. We will have to verify whether this lack of food is due to distribution problems or whether it simply coincided within the bi-monthly deadlines for food delivery previously established by the WFP. In either case, it is not surprising that the permanent shortage of food in

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<sup>18</sup> We suggest that an investigation be carried out to clarify whether it was specifically the fruit and vegetable trader in the municipal market of Camiri who was responsible for all the criticism regarding the attitude of selling "selected" - to not say lower quality- products to the beneficiaries.

communities, exacerbated in times of drought, is the result of their structural situation, rather than specific contingency situations. Nevertheless, traders did not miss the opportunity to raise the issue with this assessment and proposed that the range of products covered by Voucher, and even those distributed by the WFP, be increased.

Regarding the value of the voucher, like the beneficiaries, they also share the same feeling that this needs to be increased since, for example, part of the fruit is consumed at the very time of purchase. "Children arrive hungry, and immediately eat the bananas you buy, and you are left with only few things," says one of the traders.

### *Conditionality*

The formal absence of conditionality in the delivery of vouchers has been one of the most criticized points - with different tones - by key stakeholders on the issues of food security, with the exception of the COED. Among the remaining respondents, there was agreement on the need to demand conditionality in order to prevent a feeling of welfare aid and "bad habits" amongst the beneficiary communities. 'Food in exchange for work' and 'food in exchange for health and nutrition checkups' are common conditionalities implemented by different organizations - both public and private - related to the topic. The existence of conditionality can help generate a sense of responsibility within the beneficiaries and, as the institutions agree, help to create the foundations for promoting longer-term development projects that aim to build capacity for the self-management of risk in their own communities. They expressed that only in the event of a large-scale emergency could the absence of conditionality be considered, but only temporarily (for example, the first month with aid free of conditionality, and by the second with certain requirements).

While the logic behind the intervention of ACH to provide assistance without conditionality, precisely because this happens to be an emergency intervention, has arguments in its favour, it is important to see that the limited flexibility or willingness of other stakeholders to recognize this fact comes from an implicit agreement amongst the other stakeholders to always operate, where possible, under schemes of conditionality. Although this policy is not explicitly stated as such by the public sector in Bolivia, it indeed happens this way. This results in the intervention of ACH as the one who "swims against the current", which naturally arouses resistance from other stakeholders.

- **Assumptions:** the probability that the assumptions on which the project design was made materialize.

The project has been implemented based on two main assumptions, the responsible co-participation of the beneficiaries and the interest of other stakeholders in the management of disasters or adverse situations. The assumption regarding the co-participation of beneficiaries has been met. The second assumption has not yet materialized and there are substantiated doubts as to whether this will happen in the future, judging by the first views expressed by some key stakeholders, most of whom are unaware of the details and scope of the voucher pilot project.

The second main assumption - the sustainability of the project and the potential interest of other stakeholders - has yet to materialize, given that the sequence of intervention is to first implement the pilot study to interest potential partners by presenting results. Nevertheless, in light of discussions by some of the key stakeholders, there is a lack of total conviction regarding the technical and financial possibilities to implement this, especially because the system requires an efficient administrative and operational structure, just as it has worked in ACH, an efficiency which is apparently lacking in some of the main institutions linked to the issues of food security, according to some of the stakeholders interviewed.<sup>19</sup>

In this regard, according to the WFP, the idea of giving cash rather than vouchers or in kind food involves risks due to the difficulties in controlling the proper use of the money. In this context, "vouchers could be more applicable, this measure cannot be completely ruled out." Nevertheless, it is believed that a possible implementation by COED at a departmental level "could be complicated because it required the creation of a whole system of control and an operational logistics structure to implement it." Although the obstacles to establishing an efficient structure within the COED were not specified, the WFP did highlight the work aimed at institutionally strengthening within COED. An alternative mentioned, could be the adoption of the voucher system in the public policy framework but also incorporating civil society and private organizations with experience in food security issues as key project implementing bodies. The well-known institutional weaknesses of state entities appear to be the cause of the lack of confidence to delegate the vouchers to public sector stakeholders.

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<sup>19</sup> See also further below in the sections on sustainability and possibilities of bringing the project to a larger scale.

- **Implementation:** degree of achievement of the planned results; compliance and budget discipline; availability of a baseline; use of indicators.

The expected results were achieved satisfactorily. There is an adequate level of use of indicators. All three targets set out in the logical framework of the project were fully achieved (and exceeded).

The only indicators defined for the pilot study according to the logical framework:

- At least 90% of the vouchers distributed are used in the market for fresh produce
- At least 80% of sellers respond in timely and correct manner to the demand of the beneficiaries.
- At least 70% recognized at least 2 advantages of the voucher system

All have been fully implemented. Baseline of beneficiary communities available as an *ex ante* and *ex post* nutritional status. Good use of indicators in this sense.

- **Impact/Degree of change:** the intended and unintended impacts of the project expressed in terms of changes generated as a result of interventions carried out by the project.
  - Change in knowledge, attitudes and practices;
  - Training developed and facilitated for project participants;
  - Repercussions on the availability of vouchers within the household (gender analysis);
  - What is the impact of the voucher transfer in the empowerment and dignity of participants and their communities?

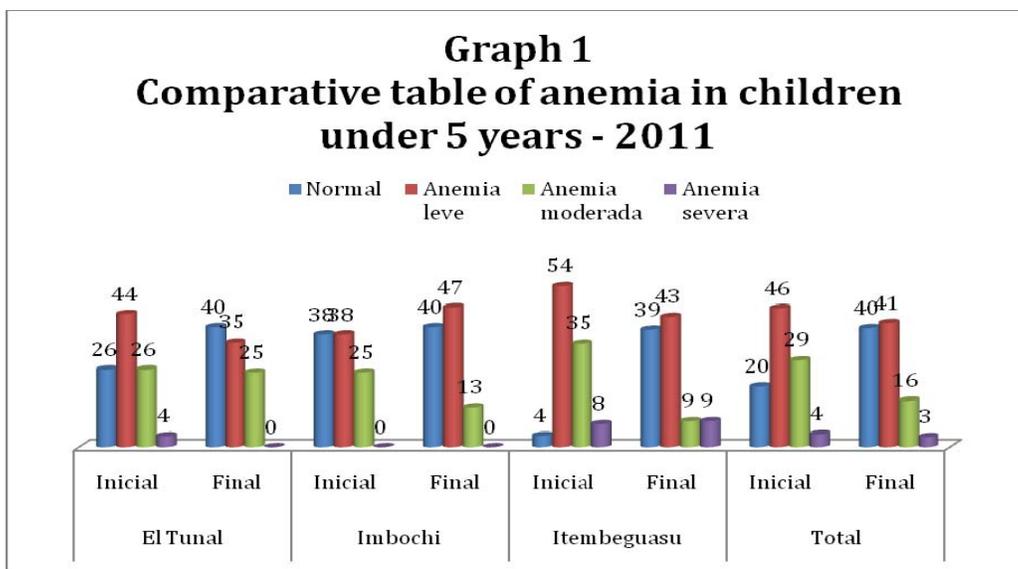
The impact and degree of change achieved in such a short implementation period of no more than three months is a positive surprise, but there are doubts regarding its sustainability.

There is no doubt that the project Vouchers for Food generated interesting impacts in the beneficiary communities in the following aspects: (i) reduction in levels of anaemia, (ii) knowledge of new ways of feeding, and (iii) empowerment and dignity, particularly in women.

Indeed, in terms of the impact on health, Graph 1 shows that in the El Tunal and Itembeguasú communities, comparing the initial and final data sets,

there was a marked improvement as the percentages of mild, moderate and severe anaemia were reduced. Likewise, in the community of Imbochi, we can see that the children experienced an improvement from moderate to mild anaemia. It can also be noted that by taking into account all children from the 3 communities, there is a noticeable improvement from an initial 20% to a final 40% within the norm, and a reduction from 46% to 41% with mild anaemia, 29% to 16% with moderate anaemia, and 4% to 3% with severe anaemia.

67% of the children under 5 years that were measured on the two occasions, showed a favourable progress. We limit ourselves to the results of anaemia because it is not expected that cases of malnutrition will present sustainable changes within three months of intervention.



Source: ACH

The mothers comment that while the vouchers were valid, children gained weight, and now the project has come to an end, they have stopped gaining weight, which encourages families to make efforts to prevent children steadily starting to lose weight.

Regarding the diet, women reported feeling happy for having had the opportunity to experience new foods and incorporate them into their family's diet. This new knowledge will not necessarily have activated a process of learning - key to generating changes in attitudes - given the limited time period of the project. In fact, the women said they had "not practiced much" the nutritional guidelines received by the project, but showed enthusiasm towards implementing these when given the opportunity

(during festivities, for example). The shortage of vegetable gardens in most of the homes of two of the three communities visited counteracts against efforts to build the capacity of women to succeed in establishing a diversified diet in the medium to long term, mainly due to the scarcity or absence of 'novelty' products.

The opportunity to make household decisions related to food has been, however, one of the aspects that have generated the greatest satisfaction for women beneficiaries. It is not just about deciding what to buy, but mainly to know you have the actual power to do so. This situation is highly valued taking into account that the improved health status of children has been one of the more visible and more valued benefits for the project beneficiaries. "They eat better," is one of the most repeated phrases. They point out that the vouchers made possible this improvement, which will wane due to the lack of conviction on behalf of the men regarding the important benefits in family health derived from investing money in the purchase of fruits and vegetables. "They will buy the same as usual, but not fruits and vegetables," they exclaim. They ensure that revenues generated by their husbands are almost invariably intended to cover the traditional "basics" (corn, flour, oil, pastas, salt) under which fruits and vegetables are not considered "essential."

The vouchers project has also enabled women to feel the opportunity of "getting out of their cell"; hence the preference over extra expenses such as paying for transport, to not miss the chance (the only chance for many) to visit the market and surrounding areas. It would be worth further analysis on the opportunities open to women, not only in terms of improving their knowledge and perceptions of urban reality, but even the potential to generate income, especially for those who know the craft of hat-making and other handmade items whose sale is restricted more because of a lack of market knowledge than because of difficulties of access.

- **Sustainability:** the extent to which the project's positive effects may continue after the project completion. What is the possibility that the positive effects of the project will last?
  - Is there still a need to cover basic needs?
  - Adjustment in relation to the customs, practices, social organization?
  - Is the voucher program is the best tool possible to achieve the set objectives? For how long and under what circumstances would this be sustainable?
  - Is there the possibility of being included in the contingency plans for an official disaster preparation?

We highlight three main results of the project that go beyond the emergency response to ensure access to food. It has additionally achieved a temporary child nutritional improvement, new knowledge in terms of food and nutrition, and improvements in the conditions of gender empowerment. After three months of pilot study, only the result of knowledge is sustainable. The nutritional results are already being lost and the improvements in gender empowerment are closely related to the presence of the vouchers and are at risk of relapsing after the completion of the project.

The need for support (particularly regarding the nutritional state of children) in communities is permanent and not only limited to context of emergencies. The shortage of water, for both consumption and for the creation and strengthening of community vegetable gardens is a growing problem in the communities, with the added problem that climatic phenomena have become increasingly severe in recent years and soil conditions have deteriorated significantly to the point where the capacity of water retention is becoming increasingly poor. In this context, beneficiaries ask that the support become permanent, which is only sustainable in the context of development programs - and not through contingency measures - that help to generate self-management capacity in the communities.

Nutritional outcomes are not sustainable. In fact, it is expected that from the second month after the completion of the voucher program, the nutritional gains will begin to fade.

The incorporation of new food types into the diet of communities - traditionally lacking fruits and vegetables - has not created problems with the local customs. Instead, the beneficiaries are very open to experimenting with the new foods.

With this project, changes in eating habits have not yet become visible (the assessment visit coincided with the celebration of Mother's Day, when the women intended to practice what they learned in cooking workshops.) There is barely a fraction of interest and only a basic set of skills have been developed for the preparation and consumption of fresh foods (unknown to many) but even at a very restricted level (the women remembered the soup with vegetables and greens, the green salad and the stir-fried liver, of which they don't buy much because it goes off during the journey back to the community).

Two of the three communities visited are preparing a school vegetable garden to engage with the school feeding project (this is an initiative of the Santa Cruz government, and implemented by the municipalities, which in reality are limited to delivering a certain amount of money to the community, which self-manages its own purchase and preparation of breakfast and lunch for the schools; these resources are usually not enough, and are only used to purchase the food, because the mothers end up take turns cooking for free).

This link with school lunches can be used as a link to engage the municipalities in the activity and advocate for the inclusion of a voucher system in the emergency plans (bottom-up). However, anchoring it into official emergency plans is not likely to work, and if it does it will be implemented top down. The main concern expressed by key stakeholders has to do with institutional weaknesses within their organizations, which is why some suggest that the system should be applied as a complementary measure and under the responsibility of a private organization; whether this be ACH, World Vision or another. The COED was the only institution interviewed that was openly in favour of implementing the voucher system.

One possible way forward is to propose that the plans should consider the vouchers as a possibility, providing the conditions are met (voucher management system installed, albeit unused in the absence of a crisis; existing voucher models of for quick printing (or a printed stock of vouchers); preselected merchants for all communities, pre-established selection criteria for beneficiaries, operating plan for the logistical start-up of an established voucher program).

An important follow-up to the ACH pilot study would be the development of a system as referred to in a raw form, for use in conjunction with the results of the pilot study to promote the activity. This way, not only can it be shown that it works, but it can also show what it would take to replicate or expand this activity, and include other stakeholder. It also gives the opportunity to understand more clearly who does what and why an entity may decide what available resources can be used to participate in what type of activity.

#### ***Additional questions***

- **Prospects for the expansion of this initiative.**
  - Is this voucher tool suitable for a massive response in the event of an emergency such as 2010-2011?

- Give special attention to the arrangements for payment of the transfer in the case of scaling-up the volume and number of people.
- Potential changes in markets, retail prices, availability of goods, others?

There are limited possibilities for scaling-up a voucher project in response to food emergencies in rural areas. One limitation lies in the prerequisite of physical access to market and the second lies in the scepticism of other stakeholders regarding this type of project and also their institutional limitations to support or implement the kind of project management these voucher projects require, even if they were in full agreement with it.

What are the possibilities of expanding this project? It is interesting to know the views of other key stakeholders:

Here is a summary of the position of the different interviewees:

- WFP considers it feasible to implement the voucher system as a first action in disaster situations, "provided it is linked to another set of actions aimed at building capacity within communities to manage their own solutions." They also believe that the system is more applicable in terms of management because it avoids several key aspects of logistics and organization of the delivery of in kind food. However, the need for a permanent monitoring of the voucher system to ensure an efficient operation (for example, that there is no shortage of supply) is a concern because of the existence of institutional weaknesses (human resources and financial management systems) in public organizations. It is considered more feasible to entrust the project implementation to private organization, but supported by state, municipal and departmental funds.
- The COED believes that the voucher system has major advantages over others (cash or in kind) in terms of a reduction in costs such as storage, transport, logistics, and distribution. Another advantage is the opportunity to guide the consumption of certain foods and to reduce the risk that the family does not spend money on anything other than food. Amongst the disadvantages, they mention the inability to monitor the final use of food, as well as potential problems to ensure the continued availability of certified food suppliers. COED believes that in financial terms, public institutions

meet the necessary conditions to carry out the voucher system, but not the planning and logistical components. They also stress the need to carry out market research to know *a priori* the actual capacity of food supply, food demand, access to markets and suppliers, as well as organizing an inter-institutional coordination system that will be capable of implementing the voucher system at larger scale. They argue that perhaps a contingency plan can be applied to as a complementary measure: in a first stage, the immediate delivery of food, and in a second stage, the voucher system.

- The PISAE maintain that it is impossible to implement the voucher system, mainly because of legal and budgetary constraints, given that they are only authorized by law to purchase and distribute dry foods (flour, corn, beans, oil and salt). Even if it were legally possible, they believe there are greater risks of misuse or misappropriation (sale) of the vouchers than through the delivery of in kind food (direct to the households). This institution agrees with the WFP that the voucher project can be implemented in case of major disasters for a short period of time, as long as it forms part of a larger action.
- The municipality of Lagunillas and the APG openly criticize the voucher system and demand development programs for the medium and long term, despite being aware that the voucher project was an intervention of contingency. In the case of the APG, the main unsolved problem is the lack of water supply; if this issue were resolved, it would be more feasible to solve others, such as lack of food, reduction in levels of anaemia, family income, and so on. For the mayor of Lagunillas, ACH and others must aim towards productive projects, technical assistance, micro-irrigation and other initiatives that will solve the underlying problems of the indigenous communities. This institution insists that the ongoing delivery of food to indigenous communities creates bad habits.
- On the other hand, officials from the municipal government of Camiri were very interested in the results of the pilot study and consider it a practical and necessary experiment to understand what action or set of actions can provide a solution to the frequent humanitarian emergencies as a result of adverse climate conditions within the municipality.

In conclusion to the above, there are indeed possibilities for scaling-up this project, but it can be expected that the implementation quality at a larger

scale will suffer. The project's technical conditions also limit the possibilities of its implementation in all 16 municipalities in the Bolivian Chaco, in the case this were necessary, as a precondition of the project is market access.

While the eight traders who worked in the pilot project were able to provide goods for the approximately 1,200 people living in the six communities that received the vouchers, it is to be expected that a potential extension of a vouchers project to 5,000 or more beneficiaries could indeed create bottlenecks in the provision of fresh food. A market study of suppliers, supply channels, demand, access to markets, amongst others, could give more accurate clues about the feasibility of expanding the project to all communities in the Chaco.

Another two bottlenecks for the voucher project are the logistics (delivery and collection of vouchers) and the accounting (manually counting the vouchers). There are no problems with the payment arrangements or cash flow or the accountability itself. ACH appointed five people (3 in Camiri and 2 in SCZ)<sup>20</sup> for overseeing the implementation of the project in six communities (3 ECHO and 3 ASDI, in terms of funding). Replicating this project at a larger scale would possibly require overseeing 20 or more communities. This would imply a requirement of at least double the staff, which in itself does not seem complicated from a financial point of view, but rather from the point of view of inter-institutional coordination assuming that the project engages two or more institutions. And this is not a minor detail when considering the widespread perception of respondents regarding current coordination and institutional weaknesses in many of their organizations.

The successful implementation of a voucher project depends crucially on the speed, quality and integrity of its administration. Flaws in the distribution of vouchers, in payment of suppliers, or the availability of goods would have an immediate impact on the confidence of project participants (traders and beneficiaries) and this would result, presumably, in a loss of accountability (on behalf of traders and beneficiaries) regarding their participation in the project.

The municipalities have different views on the experience of the voucher project. Only the city of Camiri expressed interest, but only in the sense

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<sup>20</sup> The experts from Camiri dedicated 100%, 50% and 20% of their time to the voucher pilot project and the experts from Santa Cruz dedicated 30% of their time the pilot project. These times give us a combined value of 2.3 staff, which in practice would be equivalent to two overworked people or three people with a full capacity to operate.

that the project seems interesting to them and not in the sense that they would actually have to contribute with human or financial resources.

The potential of becoming a complementary activity to the WFP continues to exist and should be further explored with representatives of this organization. The WFP’s focus on food for work could also even be implemented with the use of vouchers. If flexibility in this sense could help boost the scale of the project, then ACH should be flexible.

World Vision and the Red Cross, other private organizations that share concepts of intervention closer to those of ACH than to those of the public sector, could be potential allies for future voucher intervention at a larger scale. However, this assessment has not contacted these institutions, given that such contact was not indicated by ACH.

### 5.1 Summary of results

The following two tables provide a summary of the findings and results of this assessment:

**Table 6: Summary of the assessment (of the table below)**

	Highly non-satisfactory	Non-satisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
RELEVANCE				X
COHERENCE			X	
PROGRESS				X
EFFICIENCY				X
EFFECTIVITY			X	
ASSUMPTIONS			X	
IMPLEMENTATION				X
IMPACT / DEGREE OF CHANGE in the short term (ephemeral)				X
SUSTAINABILITY		X		
POSSIBILITIES FOR SCALING-UP		X		

Source: Prepared by the external assessment team.

**Table 7: Intervention profile / Performance Summary**

	Highly non-satisfactory	Non-satisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
<b>RELEVANCE</b>				X
Accordance with the priority needs of beneficiaries	The project is highly relevant in the context of recurrent adverse climate impacts on agricultural production and food security in rural areas, given that it strengthens food security during the period of project intervention.			
<b>COHERENCE</b>			X	
Coherence between the ACH project and other poverty reduction and food security policies and activities	There is a thematic coherence and complementarity between the pilot study and government policies. However, a situation of complementarity in terms of coordinated intervention with stakeholders from the public and private sectors involved in emergency situations has not been given during the pilot study. The knowledge of other institutions regarding the ACH voucher pilot activity is limited and not without criticism, though there is no assurance that such criticisms are precisely the product of the lack of information of the concept, methodology and results of the project.			
<b>PROGRESS / ADVANCE</b>				X
Progress towards the general objectives of the agreement.	The project has been fully implemented within the implementation timeframe. All vouchers were distributed and used according to plan. The degree of satisfaction with the project on behalf of the beneficiaries is high. The beneficiaries have used vouchers and fresh foods with high degree of responsibility.			
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>				X
Cost efficiency; capacity to convert resources into results	The project benefits from an efficient implementation in terms of management, with some weaknesses given the absence of a project manager. Compared to the cost per family per month of food distribution by the COED (WFP), the delivery of vouchers is cost efficient with a lower monthly cost of about 15% per household.			
<b>EFFECTIVITY</b>			X	
The degree to which goals and objectives of the agreement were achieved (as a consequence of activities implemented under framework of the agreement).	The project design and implementation performance have reached satisfactory levels of effectiveness, taking into consideration that the main objectives were achieved (distribution of vouchers, improved nutritional status, gender empowerment). A necessary condition for this has been the efficient management of the project structure based on appropriate amounts and frequencies of vouchers and the selection of beneficiaries and traders, of which only minor comments can be made by this assessment.			
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>			X	
The probability that the assumptions on which the project design were built upon will materialize.	The project has been implemented based on two main assumptions, the responsible co-participation of the beneficiaries and the interest of other stakeholders in the management of disasters or adverse situations. The assumption regarding the co-participation of beneficiaries has been met. The second assumption has not yet materialized and there are substantiated doubts as to whether this will happen in the future, judging by the first views expressed by			

	some key stakeholders, most of whom are unaware of the details and scope of the voucher pilot project.
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	X
Degree of achievement of the planned results	The expected results were achieved satisfactorily. There is an adequate level of use of indicators. All three targets set out in the logical framework of the project were fully achieved (and exceeded).
<b>IMPACT / DEGREE OF CHANGE</b>	X
The intended and unintended impacts of the project expressed in changes generated as a result of interventions carried out by the project.	The impact and degree of change achieved in such a short implementation period of no more than three months is a positive surprise, but there are doubts regarding its sustainability.
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	X
Accordance with local policies.	We highlight three main results of the project that go beyond the emergency response to ensure access to food. It has additionally achieved a temporary child nutritional improvement, new knowledge in terms of food and nutrition, and improvements in the conditions of gender empowerment. After three months of pilot study, only the result of knowledge is sustainable. The nutritional results are already being lost and the improvements in gender empowerment are closely related to the presence of the vouchers and are at risk of relapsing after the completion of the project.
<b>POSSIBILITIES FOR SCALING-UP</b>	X
Perspectives for scaling-up this initiative.	There are limited possibilities for scaling-up a voucher project in response to food emergencies in rural areas. One limitation lies in the prerequisite of physical access to market and the second lies in the scepticism of other stakeholders regarding this type of project and also their institutional limitations to support or implement the kind of project management these voucher projects require, even if they were in full agreement with it.

Source: Prepared by the external assessment team.

## 6. Conclusions

The Vouchers for Fresh Food project has yielded highly satisfactory results in the target population. An efficient management has also been observed in the logistics and supervision of the vouchers by ACH, who has proven to have good resilience and flexibility in light of adverse situations that demanded immediate changes in project implementation. The participants, both the direct (community) and indirect (food vendors) beneficiaries

revealed high levels of satisfaction, despite the emergence of some minor problems.

The activity has generated rapid positive results regarding the nutritional status of children, which constitutes a strong argument in favour of the intervention, compared with the direct distribution of basic food supplies, as they not only help ensure adequate levels of food in the communities but also a greater diversity in the diets which quickly results in tangible health outcomes.

However, these gains in health and nutrition are not sustainable unless there is a follow-up to the vouchers (upon the completion of their distribution), for example, through sufficient access to vegetable gardens.

The backbone of good performance and success of the project was focused on the efficient management of ACH and the willingness of participants (beneficiaries and traders) to cooperate with the project responsibly. Without the commitment of all the three parts, the results would have presumably been inferior.

It is important to understand that, at the discretion of this assessment, the distribution of vouchers is not a charitable activity, since there is an implicit correspondence on behalf of the beneficiaries in the following three issues: (1) take on a cash expenditure of significant value to access markets (transport), (2) participate responsibly in the project implementation (care of vouchers, purchase of indicated products) and (3) prepare and eat the food properly so that this will generate positive health and nutritional outcomes. Being unaware of this fact and the details of the project, several people interviewed consider that there is no correspondence in the distribution of vouchers. However, based on the logic of institutions, the conditionality should be more of a structural nature, such as health screenings, and community service work, so as to create awareness regarding the co-responsibility in the beneficiaries.

Regarding the question as to whether it is feasible to replicate the project at a larger scale in the rural context of the Bolivian Chaco (with wide coverage), the response for the most part is probably negative for the following reasons:

- a. Contingency actions require rapid interventions of short duration, on the bases of administrative structures that are flexible and relatively simple to carry out. Currently it is no feasible to achieve these conditions in Bolivia, for the implementation of a voucher system if

this was to be implemented by public institutions, with institutional weaknesses and without previous training (hence without experience in operating a voucher system), given that the success of its implementation is based mainly on a high performing administrative and logistical support.

- b. Its success is also due to the ease of the recipients to redeem their food vouchers. Here the question revolves around how much opportunity there is to articulate a market system that is capable of meeting the demand of populations located far from supply centres, without incurring a substantial increase in transportation costs for beneficiaries. If it was sufficient to identify and support this for the voucher project, at a wide scale plan it will also be necessary to articulate the system of suppliers, not only to ensure adequate provision of products, but also to ensure diversity and avoid competition and distrust among competitors (preventing monopolies, as the case of market trader in Camiri); no doubt the market system will be much more complex. Or alternatively, in the case it should again be decided to only include communities with reasonable access (in terms of cost and time), there is no guarantee that the available markets can cope for thousands of additional consumers.
- c. The positive effects on the health of the beneficiary community are lost as soon as the program ends. Therefore, the question arises as to whether it is all worth the effort if in the end the results are ephemeral. It would be ideal to implement measures that can be sustained over time, for which it would be advisable to link this kind of short-term measures to other medium- and long-term measures which will provide continuity to the actions so as to achieve sustainability of the achievements generated at the beginning of the project. A possible follow-up action can be, for example, to support access to foods that are rich in micronutrients.
- d. There is a lack of total conviction, by some of the institutions involved in food security issues, on the benefits of institutionalizing this type of project, at least in the identical manner that it was implemented by ACH. It is believed that there is a lack of strong institutional conditions to support the implementation process. Neither is it convincing the lack of conditionality in the activity, and there are doubts as to the real possibilities of organizing the food supplier market. WFP and COED, however, believe that the activity may be complementary, either at the beginning of a contingency plan

(first month) or in a second stage (after providing food in kind).

## 7. Recommendations

Although in its findings the evaluation report is cautious regarding the possibilities for replication of the project, we recommend:

1. Promote the model and its results.
2. Develop a logical framework of the intervention that clearly demonstrates the necessary activities required for implementation, their sequence and their requirements in terms of financial and human resources. This information must accompany the activity of distributing the results of the pilot study.
3. Once an ally or a partner is found for implementation on a larger scale, consider repeating a pilot project for new players to learn the implementation process and thus be prepared for an emergency.
4. If a possible replication and scaling-up with the participation of the public sector will only work (at least initially) through the flexibility regarding the issue of conditionality or exploring the possibilities of the vouchers be either a complement to the delivery of food or a measure of second instance (beginning after the onset of food or its implementation by the end of the period of food delivery, as a transitional measure to facilitate the exit from the period of food reception), then ACH should consider adopting this flexibility.
5. Since the project appears to not be replicable under all types of circumstances, and is viewed by most of the other actors either as a complementary activity or as a second stage intervention, we recommend that ACH should carry out a mapping process in the Bolivian Chaco of the communities most vulnerable to effects of climate (drought or flood) where conditions exist for the implementation of a bond project, taking into account market access and the existence of self-produced vegetables.
6. If in the event that during a possible repetition, a complementarity in terms of basic food distribution is again not generated, the voucher should be of higher value and should include access to some basic foods, considering the contingencies raised with WFP (occasional or planned as in the case of the bimonthly distribution of food).
7. For a larger scale intervention, it is necessary to automate as much as possible the financial management process of the vouchers (counting).
8. Either independently, or jointly with other organizations, ACH must make an effort to improve the level of information and knowledge of the various key players who are involved in food security issues, with a particular focus on indigenous organizations, who are experiencing a highly sensitive time in terms of claiming their economic and social demands.
9. It is very important that ACH take into consideration the cultural and political cooperation in the area of intervention, since issues such as

a lack of compliance, can lead to unnecessary assumptions about the decisions taken by the organization.

10. A possible extension of the proposed voucher project may occur in the following scenarios: as an extension of a contingency measure implemented by public institutions at all levels, so as to provide continuity and initiation to processes of capacity building for self-management and risk prevention. In this scenario, the voucher would cease to have its contingency character and would acquire a condition of a medium-term development project with three main areas:

- Technical support for the creation and/or strengthening of community vegetable gardens.
- Support and assistance in the incorporation of fruits and vegetables in the family diet so as to systematically battle the rates of anaemia and malnutrition.
- Strengthening of the capacity of community empowerment in general, and of women in particular.

## 8. Appendix

### a. List of persons interviewed and meetings held

#### *ACH/ACF*

Jimena Peroni - Food Security and Nutrition Coordinator - ACH Bolivia  
Claudia Cortez - Logistics Assistant - ACH Santa Cruz  
Brigitte Olaguivel - Food specialist - ACH Camiri  
Delfin Negrete - Voucher project promoter - ACH Camiri  
Corina Gutierrez - administration and voucher payment - ACH Camiri

#### *Departmental authorities*

Antonio Miranda - *Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia Departamental* COED. Santa Cruz  
Diana Parada - Operations Coordinator of the *Programa Integral de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional* (PISAE) Santa Cruz departmental government.  
Juan Carlos Duran - Departmental representative of WFP in Santa Cruz.

#### *Local Authorities*

Heidi Uruchari - Production Management - APG Camiri  
Fernando Montenegro - Chief officer of the Municipality of Lagunillas.  
Alfonso Vargas - Director of Human Development - Municipality of Camiri

#### *Indigenous leaders*

Pablo Paredes - Pozo Potrerillos  
Enrique Guarayos - Papiituyuro  
Julian Muchi - Itaimbeguasú

#### *Merchants*

Maudet Benavidez - Lagunillas  
Flora Aguilar - Camiri  
Antonio Rodríguez - Gutiérrez

#### *Beneficiaries*

Pozo Potrerillos focal group: 25 participants (13 men and 12 women)  
Papiituyuro focal group: 13 participants (6 men and 7 women)  
Itaimbeguasú focal group: 14 participants (5 men and 9 women)

## b. List of documents consulted

- CALP, ACF: Documento de proyecto (marco lógico)
- ACH Bolivia: Informe de línea de base (versión 19 de febrero de 2011)
- ACH, Bolivia: Informe preliminar de resultados nutricionales (versión mayo 2011)
- ACH, Bolivia: Informe preliminar de autoevaluación participativa de las comunidades (versión mayo 2011)
- ACH Bolivia: ECHO intermediate Project activity report (informe intermedio de actividades)
- CaLP, ACH: Tender Format
- ACH Bolivia - ficha de monitoreo beneficiarios
- ACH Bolivia - ficha de monitoreo vendedores
- COED, ACH, PMA: Evaluación de la Sequía en la Región del Chaco. Santa Cruz. realizada por el COED. ACH y PMA. Mayo 2010.
- Red Humanitaria: Septiembre 2010 Humanitarian Network Drought Assessment September 2010.
- Comisión Técnica CONARADE: Plan de Atención de la Emergencia Humanitaria y Agropecuaria por Sequia en el Chaco Boliviano 2010 - 2011 (Ministerios de Desarrollo Rural y de Tierras; Medio Ambiente y Agua; Viceministerio de Defensa Civil)
- DIPECHO: Documento País Bolivia - Sexto Plan de Acción DIPECHO Bolivia 2009

### c. Statistics

**Table A1: Data for calculating the cost of food distribution by COED**

Transport	(Tn/Km)
Freight Price (Bs/Tn/Km)	14
Average journey (Km)	250
Average cost / freight (Bs)	5500
Average load volume (kg)	10000
Transport cost (Bs/Kg)	0.55
Haulage price (Bs/qq)	0.9
<b>Storage</b>	
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/year)	183,596.00
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/month)	15,299.67
Storage operational cost (Bs/year)	80,368.00
Storage operational cost (Bs/month)	6,697.33
Average storage volume (Tn/year)	1,350.00
Average storage volume (Tn/month)	112.50
Average storage volume (Kg/month)	112,500.00
Average storage time (month)	3
Storage personnel (Bs/Kg)	1.63
Storage operating cost (Bs/Kg)	0.06
<b>Distribution</b>	
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/year)	104,624
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/month)	8718.67
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/day)	290.62
Distribution costs (Bs/3-day operation)	871.87
Distribution costs (Bs/kg)	0.09
Operation expenses	873.00
<b>Supervision</b>	
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/year)	156,000.00
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/month)	13000.00
Salaries of 3 people (Bs/day)	433.33
Supervisory staff cost (Bs/3-day operation)	1300.00
Fuel per operation	187.00
Operation expenses	873.00

Source: COED

Table A.2: Monthly volume of vouchers per provider

MONTH	Municipality	Provider	5 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	10 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	1 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	Total in Bs.	Item
JANUARY	Gutiérrez	Milburgay Mendoza	405	2.025			154	154	2.179	Animal derived products. Fruit and vegetables
			1.116	5.580			810	810	6.390	
FEBRUARY			513	2.565			236	236	2.801	
			11	55			9	9	64	
MARCH					25	250	20	20	270	
			15	150	26	26	176			
SUB-TOTALS			2.045	10.225	40	400	1.255	1.255	11.880	
FEBRUARY	Gutiérrez	Antonio Rodríguez	761	3.805			286	286	4.091	Animal derived products. Fruit and vegetables
			320	1.600			205	205	1.805	
MARCH					310	3.100	330	330	3.430	
					377	3.770	1.122	1.122	4.892	
SUB-TOTALS			1.081	5.405	687	6.870	1.943	1.943	14.218	
JANUARY	Lagunillas	Esther Mollo	660	3.300			117	117	3.417	Fruit and Vegetables
			207	1.035			100	100	1.135	
FEBRUARY			914	4.570			347	347	4.917	
			235	1.175			237	237	1.412	
MARCH					522	5.220	933	933	6.153	
					132	1.320	454	454	1.774	
APRIL					173	1.730	390	390	2.120	
			15	150	46	46	196			

<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>2.016</b>	<b>10.080</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>8.420</b>	<b>2.624</b>	<b>2.624</b>	<b>21.124</b>	
JANUARY	Lagunillas	Maudet Benavidez	579	2.895			169	169	3.064	Animal derived products.
			82	410			83	83	493	
FEBRUARY			691	3.455			1.248	1.248	4.703	
			40	200			70	70	270	
MARCH					398	3.980	714	714	4.694	
					29	290	89	89	379	
APRIL					238	2.380	426	426	2.806	
					6	60	28	28	88	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>1.392</b>	<b>6.960</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>6.710</b>	<b>2.827</b>	<b>2.827</b>	<b>16.497</b>	
JANUARY	Camiri	Benedicta Heredia	182	910			28	28	938	Dairy products
			112	560			23	23	583	
FEBRUARY			627	3.135			1.749	1.749	4.884	
			47	235			128	128	363	
MARCH					393	3.930	896	896	4.826	
					49	490	187	187	677	
APRIL					231	2.310	436	436	2.746	
					81	810	207	207	1.017	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>968</b>	<b>4.840</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>7.540</b>	<b>3.654</b>	<b>3.654</b>	<b>16.034</b>	
JANUARY	Camiri	Liduvina Zambrana	93	465			19	19	484	Meat
			93	465			12	12	477	
FEBRUARY			544	2.720			1.226	1.226	3.946	
			43	215			84	84	299	
MARCH					287	2.870	352	352	3.222	

					33	330	120	120	450	
APRIL					121	1.210	113	113	1.323	
					60	600	88	88	688	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>773</b>	<b>3.865</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>5.010</b>	<b>2.014</b>	<b>2.014</b>	<b>10.889</b>	
JANUARY	Camiri	Flora Aguilar Borja	382	1.910			477	477	2.387	Fruit and Vegetables
			120	600			241	241	841	
FEBRUARY			2.217	11.085			2.586	2.586	13.671	
			297	1.485			324	324	1.809	
MARCH					990	9.900	2.012	2.012	11.912	
					231	2.310	619	619	2.929	
APRIL					861	8.610	2.060	2.060	10.670	
			83	830	270	270	1.100			
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>3.016</b>	<b>15.080</b>	<b>2.165</b>	<b>21.650</b>	<b>8.589</b>	<b>8.589</b>	<b>45.319</b>	
FEBRUARY	Camiri	Veronica Salas	141	705			462	462	1.167	Meat
			19	95			50	50	145	
MARCH					112	1.120	108	108	1.228	
					38	380	90	90	470	
APRIL					196	1.960	95	95	2.055	
			52	520	128	128	648			
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>			<b>160</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>3.980</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>5.713</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>			<b>11.451</b>	<b>57.255</b>	<b>6.058</b>	<b>60.580</b>	<b>23.839</b>	<b>23.839</b>	<b>141.674</b>	

Table A.3: Voucher circulation per fortnight

PERIOD	Municipality	Provider	Month	5 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	10 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	1 Bs. Vouchers	Sub-total	Total In Bs.	Items
First monthly fortnight	Gutiérrez	Milburgay Mendoza	January	405	2.025			154	154	2.179	Animal derived products. Fruit and vegetables
			February	513	2.565			236	236	2.801	
			March			25	250	20	20	270	
Second monthly fortnight			January	1.116	5.580			810	810	6.390	
			February	11	55			9	9	64	
			March			15	150	26	26	176	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>2.045</b>	<b>10.225</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1.255</b>	<b>1.255</b>	<b>11.880</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Gutiérrez	Antonio Rodríguez	February	761	3.805			286	286	4.091	Animal derived products. Fruit and vegetables
			March			310	3.100	330	330	3.430	
Second monthly fortnight			February	320	1.600			205	205	1.805	
			March		0	377	3.770	1.122	1.122	4.892	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>1.081</b>	<b>5.405</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>6.870</b>	<b>1.943</b>	<b>1.943</b>	<b>14.218</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Lagunillas	Esther Mollo	January	660	3.300			117	117	3.417	Fruit and Vegetables
			February	914	4.570			347	347	4.917	
			March			522	5.220	933	933	6.153	
April					173	1.730	390	390	2.120		
Second monthly fortnight			January	207	1.035			100	100	1.135	
			February	235	1.175			237	237	1.412	
	March			132	1.320	454	454	1.774			

			April			15	150	46	46	196	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>2.016</b>	<b>10.080</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>8.420</b>	<b>2.624</b>	<b>2.624</b>	<b>21.124</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Lagunillas	Maudet Benavidez	January	579	2.895			169	169	3.064	Animal derived products.
			February	691	3.455			1.248	1.248	4.703	
			March			398	3.980	714	714	4.694	
			April			238	2.380	426	426	2.806	
Second monthly fortnight			January	82	410			83	83	493	
			February	40	200			70	70	270	
			March			29	290	89	89	379	
			April			6	60	28	28	88	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>1.392</b>	<b>6.960</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>6.710</b>	<b>2.827</b>	<b>2.827</b>	<b>16.497</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Camiri	Benedicta Heredia	January	182	910			28	28	938	Dairy products
			February	627	3.135			1.749	1.749	4.884	
			March			393	3.930	896	896	4.826	
			April			231	2.310	436	436	2.746	
Second monthly fortnight			January	112	560			23	23	583	
			February	47	235			128	128	363	
			March			49	490	187	187	677	
			April			81	810	207	207	1.017	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>968</b>	<b>4.840</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>7.540</b>	<b>3.654</b>	<b>3.654</b>	<b>16.034</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Camiri	Liduvina Zambrana	January	93	465			19	19	484	Meat
			February	544	2.720			1.226	1.226	3.946	
			March			287	2.870	352	352	3.222	
			April			121	1.210	113	113	1.323	

Second monthly fortnight			January	93	465			12	12	477	
			February	43	215			84	84	299	
			March			33	330	120	120	450	
			April			60	600	88	88	688	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>773</b>	<b>3.865</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>5.010</b>	<b>2.014</b>	<b>2.014</b>	<b>10.889</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Camiri	Flora Aguilar Borja	January	382	1.910			477	477	2.387	Fruit and Vegetables
			February	2.217	11.085			2.586	2.586	13.671	
			March			990	9.900	2.012	2.012	11.912	
			April			861	8.610	2.060	2.060	10.670	
Second monthly fortnight			January	120	600			241	241	841	
			February	297	1.485			324	324	1.809	
			March			231	2.310	619	619	2.929	
			April			83	830	270	270	1.100	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>3.016</b>	<b>15.080</b>	<b>2.165</b>	<b>21.650</b>	<b>8.589</b>	<b>8.589</b>	<b>45.319</b>	
First monthly fortnight	Camiri	Veronica Salas	January	141	705			462	462	1.167	Meat
			February			112	1.120	108	108	1.228	
			March			196	1.960	95	95	2.055	
Second monthly fortnight			January	19	95			50	50	145	
			February			38	380	90	90	470	
			March			52	520	128	128	648	
<b>SUB-TOTALS</b>				<b>160</b>	<b>15.880</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>26.460</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>9.792</b>	<b>5.713</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>				<b>11.451</b>	<b>72.335</b>	<b>6.058</b>	<b>83.060</b>	<b>23.839</b>	<b>32.698</b>	<b>141.674</b>	

Table A.4: AMOUNTS INCLUDED IN EACH ENVELOPE DISTRIBUTED TO BENEFICIARIES						
Bs. 250 vouchers presented						
Nº	DERIVED PRODUCTS Bs. 10	DERIVED PRODUCTS Bs. 1	VEGETABLES Bs. 10	VEGETABLES Bs. 1	FRUIT Bs. 10	FRUIT Bs. 1
1	9	17	4	13	8	10
Bs. 230 vouchers presented						
2	9	9	3	18	7	13
Bs. 150 vouchers presented						
3	6	4	2	12	4	14

d. Materials developed by the project (reduced size) – vouchers and leaflet





**Capacitación**

ACH organiza talleres de capacitación en el uso de los bonos, recetas para la preparación de comidas con alimentos frescos, y prácticas nutricionales claves. Participe!

**Monitoreo y Evaluación**

Técnicos de ACH visitarán sus comunidades y hogares. El/ella le hará preguntas sobre el uso que le está dando al bono, su alimentación, sus problemas, sus inquietudes y expectativas con respecto al mecanismo. También se evaluará el nivel de anemia, peso, edad y talla de los niños y niñas, mujeres embarazadas y madres lactantes.

**¿Y si tengo alguna duda?**

Los Técnicos de ACH visitarán su comunidad y con gusto atenderán cualquier consulta!

También pueden ir a la siguiente dirección:  
ACH-Base Camiri Calle Karapari esq. Chichapi Zona ex-campamento  
Teléfono: 395 24 845

**RESPONDIENDO A LA SEQUÍA EN EL CHACO BOLIVIANO**

Programa de "Ayuda Humanitaria a través de asistencia de emergencia y recuperación para familias afectadas por la extrema sequía de 2010 en la Región del Chaco, Bolivia!"

¡COMPRE SUS ALIMENTOS FRESCOS!

**Prueba piloto: Bonos por alimentos frescos**

**Programa de Respuesta a la Sequía**

**¿Dónde?**

El bono es un medio para que su familia pueda consumir alimentos variados y sanos.

**¿Cómo?**

Preparación y respuesta ante la sequía

Agua para consumo + Semillas para la recuperación ante la sequía

Prueba piloto: Bono por alimentos frescos

**¿Que es el bono por alimentos frescos?**

El bono es un medio para que su familia pueda consumir alimentos variados y sanos.

**¿Dónde y cómo lo uso?**

El bono se intercambia en el MERCADO. Hay muchos vendedores que participan en Gutiérrez, Camiri y Leguizamón!

**¿Quiénes los reciben?**

Todas las familias de la comunidad que participan en la prueba piloto.

**¿Por cuánto tiempo?**

Durante tres meses.

**¿Quiénes son el grupo meta principal?**

Mujeres embarazadas, en periodo de lactancia, niños y niñas menores de 5 años.

**¿Cómo identifico a los vendedores que participan?**

Puedes identificar los puntos de compra, donde veas un letrero o cartel fuera de la tienda que está participando con la imagen del proyecto.

