

# Marie Stopes International Bolivia

Emily Schweningen

]



Center for  
Health Market Innovations

*freedom*  
from Hunger

# Table of Contents

---

Overview of CHMI and Case Studies..... 3

Executive Summary..... 4

Model Overview..... 5

Model..... 6

Impact..... 9

Growth Plans..... 11

Financials..... 11

Interviews..... 13

# Overview of CHMI

---

The [Center for Health Market Innovations](#) (CHMI) is a global network of partners that seeks to improve the functioning of health markets in developing countries to deliver better results for the poor. CHMI works to accelerate the diffusion of Health Market Innovations, programs and policies—implemented by governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social entrepreneurs or private companies—that have the potential to improve the way health markets operate. These programs and policies enable the transactions between consumers and private healthcare providers to lead to better health and financial protection, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable.

To bridge the existing information gaps about Health Market Innovations and help diffuse promising programs, CHMI engages in three core activities -- Information, Analysis, and Linkages -- linked and integrated through the CHMI website. Users and contributors include program implementers and social entrepreneurs in the for-profit and non-profit private sectors, donors and investors, government policymakers and practitioners, and researchers from academic institutions.

CHMI categorizes programs according to five distinct program types – organizing delivery, financing care, regulating performance, changing behaviors, and enhancing processes. One level of program documentation consists of a standardized web-based template that captures key data points about each program (such as geographic coverage, target population, health focus, numbers served, etc.). In addition to mapping the Health Market Innovations globally, CHMI also completes more comprehensive case studies designed to provide a deeper look at the structures, activities, and impact of innovative programs.

In the Andean region, CHMI works with Freedom from Hunger to identify and provide information and analyses of health market innovators in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. Marie Stopes International Bolivia was selected from a comprehensive scan of innovative health programs in the Andean region.

# Executive Summary

---

The level of poverty and inequality in Bolivia has produced health status statistics that are significantly lower than other countries in the region. Not surprisingly there is also a considerable divide in health status and access to services between rural and urban populations, and along socioeconomic and ethnic lines. Bolivia faces serious maternal-child health problems. The maternal death rate in 2010 was 260 per 100,000 live births<sup>1</sup>, one of the highest rates in Latin America. Reproductive health issues include an unmet need for contraception; an estimated 23% of married reproductive age women in 2003<sup>2</sup>.

Marie Stopes International (MSI) is a UK-based, pro-choice international sexual and reproductive health organization with 30 years of experience. Currently operating in 43 countries, MSI manages 629 international centers and last year provided services to over 7 million couples. MSI, operating in Bolivia since 1994, collaborates with local partners making long-term commitments to communities, public institutions and social organizations within the country.

MSI Bolivia offers health services in 6 medical centers located in Bolivia's major cities (in 4 of 9 departments). In addition, MSI Bolivia has 5 Mobile Units, which visit rural and semi-urban areas, reaching a total of more than 110 municipalities. One of the principal characteristics of MSI Bolivia is the delivery of high quality low-cost services, which, depending on the economic condition of the client, are sometimes provided free-of-charge. MSI also provides an information telephone line that provides accurate information about reproductive and sexual health.

MSI uses "Couple Years of Protection", or CYP, as an indicator to measure program performance. Couple Years of Protection is the estimated protection provided by contraceptive methods during a one-year period, based on the volume of all contraceptives sold or distributed free of charge to clients during that period. MSI programs worldwide provided over 12 million CYP in 2007, reflecting an increase of 30% over the previous year and the highest growth experienced by the organization in the last 32 years of continuous work. MSI Bolivia is currently one of the most important providers of sexual and reproductive health services in Bolivia.

MSI Bolivia is continuing to grow and plans to open centers in two new departments and incorporate 3 additional mobile units, extending services in intermediate cities and towns without access to doctors. The goal is to offer services to 300,000 new customers equaling 200,000 Couple Years of Protection (CYPs) over the next two years. MSI Bolivia hopes to respond to growing demand for their services which has increased by 31% from 2009-2010.

MSI Bolivia works with annual revenue of USD 1,498,300. Of this, 50% is raised from fee revenue from clinic services and 50% is from government, private foundations, and individual donors. External financing is important for cost coverage of the mobile services, which is also cross-subsidized by fee revenue generated by the stationery clinics. The ultimate goal is to address unmet need and one of the most effective strategies is removing the financial barrier for the client.

# Model Overview

---

<b>Implementer</b>	Marie Stopes International Bolivia
<b>Partners</b>	National Government, Departmental and Municipal Governments, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Local Health Networks
<b>Type of Organization</b>	Private Not-For-Profit Organization
<b>Central Office Location</b>	La Paz, Bolivia
<b>Country Location</b>	Bolivia
<b>Province Location</b>	Santa Cruz, La Paz, Cochabamba ,Chuquisaca (Permanent Centers) Oruro, Potosí, Beni, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, La Paz, Chuquisaca (Mobile Centers) National level (an informative and confidential telephone service)
<b>City/Community of Operation</b>	La Paz, Bolivia
<b>Stage</b>	Established and in state of expansion
<b>Year of Initiation</b>	1994
<b>Number of employees</b>	50-99
<b>Technology</b>	Confidential call Center Electronic patient database registry
<b>Type of Program</b>	Enhancing Processes › Mobile clinic Changing Behaviors › Social marketing Changing Behaviors › Health awareness/education Organizing Delivery › Service Delivery Chain Financing Care › Cross subsidization
<b>Type of Program Health Focus</b>	Maternal and child health Sexual and Reproductive Health HIV/AIDS
<b>Geographic Location</b>	Urban/peri-urban/rural
<b>Target Population</b>	General Population
<b>Number of visits</b>	12,000 Mobile Units visits; 100,000 Clinic visits
<b>Income Level of Target Population</b>	All income levels
<b>Source of Revenue</b>	Donations
<b>Additional Revenue</b>	Clinic fees and sliding scale fees
<b>Major Donors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Department for International Development - DFID</li> <li>• Direct Relief International, USA</li> <li>• UK Embassy in Bolivia</li> <li>• Foundation West Wind</li> <li>• Hewlett Foundation, USA</li> <li>• Jersey Overseas Aid Commission, UK</li> </ul>

# Model

---

## Background and History

Marie Stopes International (MSI) is a UK-based, pro-choice international sexual and reproductive health organization with 30 years of experience. Currently operating in 43 countries, MSI manages 629 international centers and last year provided services to over 7 million couples. Founded in London UK, it honors the legacy of the pro-choice advocate, author and doctor, Marie Stopes (1880-1958) who founded a series of successful sexual and reproductive health clinics. Throughout its worldwide health centers, MSI offers the following: family planning; safe abortion and post-abortion care; maternal and child health care including safe delivery and obstetrics; diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections; and HIV/AIDS prevention. MSI successfully uses modern marketing techniques to achieve the mission of preventing unwanted pregnancies and births. MSI's mission is: "Children by choice, not by chance".

Marie Stopes International Bolivia (MSI Bolivia), operating in Bolivia since 1994, collaborates with local partners making long-term commitments to communities, public institutions and social organizations within the country. Most projects that have been developed are designed to create and strengthen a network of specialized fixed and mobile units to provide information and high quality sexual and reproductive health services at a low cost. By charging affordable fees for services rendered and using models of cross-subsidization, MSI Bolivia is working to ensure their sustainability independent of external financing.

## Business Model

MSI Bolivia established health services in six health centers located in Bolivia's major cities (in four of nine departments). Each health center includes offices, a laboratory, an ultrasound room, and a counseling center. They are open to the entire community and serve as a source of income generation. Currently, four of the six clinics are self-sustaining and require no outside funding. In addition, MSI Bolivia has five Mobile Units which visit rural and remote semi-urban areas, reaching a total of more than 110 municipalities. One of the principal characteristics of Marie Stopes is the delivery of high quality low-cost services, which, depending upon the economic condition of the client, are sometimes provided free-of-charge. External financing helps to provide these services, but cross-subsidization from the established clinics also helps to subsidize the work done by the mobile units.

## *Social Marketing*

MSI Bolivia has developed a social marketing strategy with the goal of positioning itself as the leading provider of private sexual and reproductive health services in Bolivia. Initial marketing strategies were aimed at informing the target population about the work and services provided by MSI Bolivia. More recently, MSI Bolivia recognized the potential value in marketing messages that promote sexual and reproductive health as a basic human right granted to all Bolivians by Article 66 of the new state constitution. MSI Bolivia also hired a research company to evaluate the impact of this particular campaign, collecting baseline data and assessing knowledge increase after the campaign. Data is pending. By networking with local organizations, rural municipalities and institutions, MSI Bolivia uses radio spots, billboards and animated films to raise awareness of women's rights and points of access to sexual and reproductive health. MSI Bolivia uses market research to identify the preferred methods for local communities to receive information on sexual and reproductive health. Most communities first prefer to get information from friends, neighbors and relatives, followed by radio and TV. Market research also indicated that clients wanted to discuss these issues with complete privacy. In response

MSI created a “Confidential Line” to provide adolescents and young people throughout the nation with information regarding sexual and reproductive health. The confidential line has a lower cost than a regular telephone line and is staffed six days a week by MSI trained students who are in their last year of studying psychology or communications at a local university

MSI Bolivia values customer feedback as a method to evaluate individual clinic performance. Through interviews with clients, the strategic marketing firm Track was able to make recommendations for strategies to improve services. Information gathered from clients informed process improvements including marketing practices, waiting room procedures and competitive pricing.

MSI Bolivia also provides education about sexual and reproductive rights and sexual violence, using participatory learning methods. These topics are presented in community spaces by the organization’s local health promoters. MSI Bolivia also works with Ministry of Health personnel to deliver education. Education is also provided through workshops, fairs, and house-to-house visits.

#### *Appropriate Care*

Market research has also provided information about the type of environment where clients feel more comfortable receiving care and have adjusted services to fit these needs. Clients were intimidated by doctors dressed in white, working in cold, sterile environments that they associated with illness, not health. By creating and supporting a trained staff that can perform the majority of the consultations and provide advice for clients in warm, friendlier environments, clients report that they feel more at ease.

#### *Strategic*

#### *Alliances*

MSI Bolivia coordinates their programs and activities with national and local government campaigns and programs such as the Universal Maternal and Child Insurance (SUMI). Similarly, MSI Bolivia has key partnerships with many private institutions at different levels and within varied networks. For example, MSI Bolivia has organized alliances of NGOs and government health organizations to achieve national objectives in the campaign against uterine cancer. These strategic alliances help MSI Bolivia to expand the reach and range of services available, generate interest and demand in the municipalities and to contribute to Millennium Development Goals. The alliances also provide a channel for technical assistance, sharing of best practices for improvement of quality of care and to promote evaluation and research.

#### *Mobile*

#### *Units*

In 2006, MSI Bolivia began offering services through mobile units in an effort to extend services from the major cities to more remote areas. Findings from market research indicated a lack of family planning options in addition to an inconsistent supply of contraceptives... It found that while women and men face multiple barriers to access contraception in both cities and rural areas; that rural populations face greater challenges. Currently five mobile units target populations in provinces in more rural areas that are less able to provide the products and services necessary to meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of their communities.

MSI Bolivia has negotiated agreements with the national Ministry of Health and with local governmental units (departments and municipalities) that enable them to use mobile units to provide services at municipal health posts or health centers. The Municipality schedules a visit from MSI Bolivia, organizes potential clients and provides a place for the services. The mobile unit is comprised of a team of four people: a driver/promoter, an obstetrician-gynecologist, a registered nurse, and an auxiliary nurse/promoter. A promoter will arrive before the mobile unit and begin sharing information about

services and schedule visits. One of the most successful methods for promoting mobile unit visits in these areas is through the radio. Each mobile unit enters a community with its own supplies, a few medications, contraceptives and kits for screenings. Many health centers provide some materials. Currently, MSI Mobile Units are acting partly as the operational arm of the Municipal Health Posts, which have not yet reached full service capability. With increased coverage by SUMI, MSI Bolivia may be compensated for services rendered from the Ministry of Health, making the program sustainable and creating opportunities for expansion.

The alliances between the MSI Bolivia mobile units and the municipal health posts, has enabled MSI to add tubal ligations to the range of services that can be provided, in even the most remote areas. Even though tubal ligation is one of the most widely used contraceptive methods around the world, in Bolivia only 6.5% of women have the procedure, due to different obstacles that impeded access. Previously, due to political regulations, clients who required a tubal ligation in MSI Bolivia centers had to be referred to clinics that were approved to provide the service. In 2005 regulatory changes allowed MSI Bolivia to provide this service at the fixed centers and the mobile units. In the first year that tubal ligation was available MSI Bolivia performed 500 procedures. Demand has continued to increase with 1,800 procedures performed in 2007, placing MSI Bolivia as a primary provider of tubal ligation in the country, second the state.

### **Human Resources**

Because Marie Stopes International operates in of a number of countries, all country programs—including MSI Bolivia—have the opportunity to share best practices and learn from one another. This connection organizationally and operationally has allowed country based organizations to share lessons learned and to access a wealth of knowledge and technical expertise. MSI has developed innovative technological protocols and procedures that allow MSI Bolivia to respond efficiently to the demands of customers. MSI Bolivia currently manages a staff of about 70 professionals that includes doctors, drivers, health promoters and social marketing experts.

MSI Bolivia offers ongoing trainings to staff to assure quality of care. Positions within the organization require certain levels of training and professional knowledge. Internal assessments test staff during review processes by the clinical services manager. MSI Bolivia uses the "Technical Service Rating", which is a tool used for assessing and improving clinical staff service quality.

### **Target Population**

MSI Bolivia provides services for the general population, but specific services are targeted for certain groups including low-income women and men, adolescents and young adults, ages 10-45. Typical clients are women and men of low socioeconomic and education levels in urban and rural areas that require reproductive health services. Fees from clients in more economically advantaged areas help to subsidize programs in rural or peri-urban districts for populations with low socioeconomic levels. It is estimated, based on center locations and mobile unit reach, that MSI Bolivia targets a population of approximately 800,000 individuals.

### **Challenges**

Extending access to reproductive health services to a greater number of Bolivians has been an ongoing challenge for MSI Bolivia. However, MSI Bolivia plans to expand reach through the addition of at least three more mobile units to meet growing demand. In addition, they will be implementing a new strategy of community outreach by offering a network of 24 community nurses to work on sexual and reproductive health services with an emphasis on contraception. Expansion of the mobile units requires



funding for the initial phases. More mobile units will mean that more rural communities can be reached which will enable adequate follow-up care and monitoring for clients. Also, after years of leasing properties for the permanent clinics, MSI Bolivia is considering options of purchasing property to increase assets and create leverage for future expansion.

MSI Bolivia is well known for its pro-choice stance, and it works closely with the municipal health posts to provide sexual and reproductive care. Occasionally there are objections to the services offered by MSI Bolivia for religious or political reasons, and in the past this has been an impediment to expanding services in new areas. The state government, however, supports the work of MSI Bolivia and most obstacles have been surmountable.

The new constitution, established in 2009, states that adequate sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental right and a true exercise of citizenship, not only from a health standpoint, but also within cultural, educational and justice services. MSI Bolivia actively supports this and works as an advocate to build greater awareness and capacity for Bolivians to better recognize and understand their rights. They also continue to apply pressure to the state to provide the resources and infrastructure so that people can enjoy those rights. Creating an environment of cooperation is critical for the best possible sexual and reproductive health outcomes for the population.

## Impact

---

The MSI programs worldwide provided over 12 million CYP (Couple Years of Protection) in 2007, reflecting an increase of 30% over the previous year and the highest growth experienced by the organization in the last 32 years of continuous work. As illustrated in image 1, a sharp increase in tubal ligations occurred as the Bolivian government regulations shifted allowing MSI Bolivia to perform the procedure rather than referring clients to other clinics. At present MSI Bolivia is providing about 66% of all total tubal ligations provided in Bolivia.

**MSI Bolivia: Number of Tubal Ligation Procedures per Year**

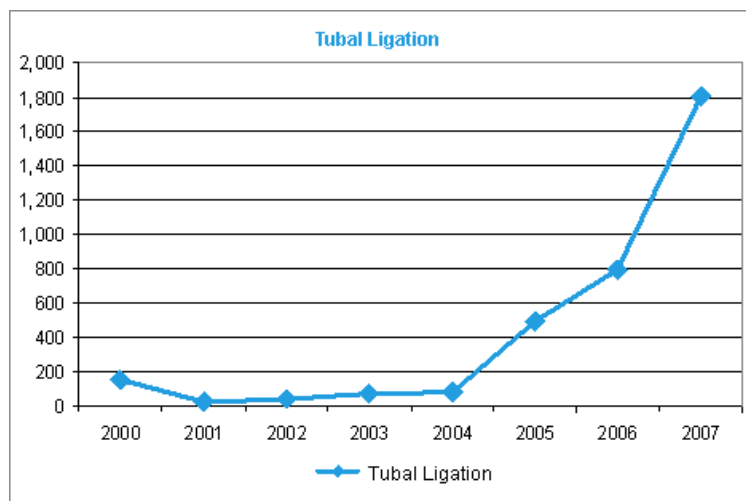


Image 1

MSI Bolivia provides a wide range of services. Initially founded to offer contraceptive and family planning services to women, MSI Bolivia has remained focused on its founding mission, “Children by

choice, not by chance”, while providing services for the entire community, including adolescents and men.

#### Monthly average of Total MSI Bolivia Clients by Service in 2010

Type of Service	Clients
Consultations	6890
Laboratory	3460
Ultrasound	2750
Vasectomy	36
Tubal Ligation	394
IUDs	1560
Injectables	366
Implants	44
Pills	685
Condoms	2640
Emergency Contraception	297
<b>Total Clients</b>	<b>15,000</b>

MSI Bolivia continuously monitors all organizational activities and conducts internal and external evaluations with an assessment tool that uses a standardized format for all of MSI’s regional programs; this creates transparency and accountability. MSI Bolivia uses its Annual Operating Plan and objective results from evaluations to assess and improve its technical and financial performance. Evaluations include documenting how the organization responds to challenges and obstacles and sharing these lessons learned across regions. MSI Bolivia conducts internal assessments, measuring productivity using a methodology recommended by MSI and adapted by MSI Bolivia. Other methods such as use of a “mystery, or undercover client” have also been helpful to assess customer service.

One strong point of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is that it provides early identification of deviations within the indicators and targets in the monitoring plan. This allows the program to take corrective action to get back on track, as needed. These warning signs allow MSI Bolivia to make corrections to adjust the pace of service delivery, improve team performance, ensure customer satisfaction and make efficient use of resources. The M&E plan ensures that information about service delivery of is documented in a timely manner and that findings get communicated to the appropriate managers and areas of responsibility.

In 2007, MSI Programs Worldwide:

- Added 46 new centers to its existing network of 431 centers and thousands of points of service provision in remote rural areas.
- Increased the number of tubal ligations by 27%.
- Provided medical abortion services in 28 countries in Africa and Asia.
- Opened new programs in Ghana, Mexico City, Papua New Guinea and East Timor.
- Provided high-level medical training to 25 professionals who then trained more than 400 people as a cascade training that aims to reach more than 4,000 professionals within the next four years.
- Organized the first Global Safe Abortion Conference in London, attended by over 700 delegates from 66 countries, which played a key role in advocacy efforts in both the UK and internationally.

# Growth Plans

---

MSI Bolivia plans to open centers and incorporate three additional mobile units in two new departments (similar to states) in Bolivia, extending services in intermediate cities and towns without access to doctors. It is estimated that with this growth, MSI Bolivia will reach an additional 300,000 new customers over the next two years. Services have grown by 31% from 2009-2010 and MSI Bolivia plans to respond to this increased demand.

## *New Strategy*

MSI Bolivia will implement a new outreach strategy by offering a network of 24 community nurses to expand the organization's reach. The plan targets medium-sized cities, with populations of 60,000 or more. The nurses, trained by MSI Bolivia, will serve as sexual and reproductive health educators, while also providing some direct services, and referring clients to medical centers. By increasing capacity within communities, MSI Bolivia will be able to expand coverage and capture unmet demand.

## *New Products*

MSI Bolivia is tied to the large, global MSI network and therefore receives the latest information and access to new contraceptives. One example of this is highlighted in MSI Bolivia's work provide the SINO Implant, a new contraceptive for women that is a subcutaneous hormonal implant. SINO Implant lasts 4 years and is 91% effective. Although it is not yet widely available, it is more cost-effective than other implants. In the future, with the benefits of new research, MSI Bolivia would like to also be able to offer a contraceptive pill for men.

# Financials

---

MSI Bolivia has annual revenue of USD 1,498,300. Of this, 50% comes from client fees generated mainly by the health centers, and 50% is from donors that include government, private foundations, and individuals. MSI Bolivia is in the process of standardizing financial tracking and reporting with a new computer system.

MSI Bolivia's fundraising strategy includes the development of strong relationships with private companies and aid agencies supported by MSI. Through these relationships, MSI Bolivia plans to raise \$500,000 in subsequent years to fund expansion plans. Funds raised will be used to purchase land for the construction of new clinics to reduce costs of rent in the long-term and to provide leverage for expansion in the future.

## *Cross-subsidization*

The cost of mobile units is designed to make services very accessible to low income individuals in rural areas. Charges for services like tubal ligations, offered for 50 Bolivianos (a little over USD 7) are below the actual costs for the service. MSI Bolivia is able to charge more in urban areas (where tubal ligations cost 300 Bolivianos or USD 43) in order to cross-subsidize the mobile unit services. The end goal is to decrease unmet need and MSI Bolivia has found that the biggest barrier to access is financial and therefore services must be affordable to effectively reach low income and poor clients.

Fees for services are set by an analysis of competition and the individual customer's ability to pay. At clinics, fees cover a large portion of operating costs, including partial coverage of inputs, labor and supplies. A customer's ability to pay is assessed by location, occupation, education, size of family and willingness to pay. Services of MSI Bolivia centers are similarly priced across the country. Every six months prices are assessed and when increases are necessary they are made incrementally.

Of the six clinics, four are currently sustainable and operate with all costs covered from income generated by services rendered. In general, clinics require the greatest investment of donor funds for the first three years. After three years, the clinics achieve greater cost coverage and make the transition into self-sustainability.

# INTERVIEWS

---

Ramiro Claure  
*Director de País*  
Country Director

Roxana León  
*Gerenta de Calidad de Servicios*  
Manager of Quality of Service

Silvana Resendy  
*Gerenta de Marketing*  
Marketing Manager

Enrique Durana  
*Gerente de Desarrollo de Equipo y Administración*  
Manager of Development of Equipment and  
Administration

Gerardo Callisaya  
*Gerente de Finanzas*  
Finance Manager

---

<sup>1</sup> World Bank. [http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/ddpreports/ViewSharedReport?&CF=1&REPORT\\_ID=1336&REQUEST\\_TYPE=VI EWADVANCED&HF=N/IDGProfile.asp](http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/ddpreports/ViewSharedReport?&CF=1&REPORT_ID=1336&REQUEST_TYPE=VI EWADVANCED&HF=N/IDGProfile.asp)

<sup>2</sup> World Bank, Development Research Group <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY>