



Community Economic Development Training in Bolivia

The Community Economic Development (CED) project in Bolivia trains participants to support community-based initiatives that foster sustainable livelihoods. The curriculum uses a train-the-trainer component, such that graduates can share new knowledge and tools with others to multiply the effects.

CED is not a theory or model, but rather an approach or way of thinking. Instructors engage the participants in meaningful learning about how to mobilize community capital—to recognize and build on the assets in the communities—the people, institutions, civil society, culture, social relations and the built and natural environment.

Participants include traditional indigenous leaders, municipal officials and NGO personnel.

“It’s all about ‘on the ground’ relevance, recognizing local conditions and grounding the learning in action.”

Challenges and Questions

- How can instructors encourage development professionals, indigenous leaders and government officials to apply the principles of CED, to work together, and to foster local development based on local realities?
- How do the instructors create a respectful and rich learning situation where people with different educational backgrounds co-exist and co-learn?

Learning Materials

- Narratives of experience
- Tools: checklists, guides, critical questions
- Interactive technology
- Video and photography
- Group activities/scenarios

Strategies for Teaching

- CED principles in teaching: inclusion, participation, local relevance, engaging and mobilizing assets (individual and community)
- Adult education principles: learner-centred and respectful
- Participants bring their actual experiences, problems, and challenges to the classroom
- Participants integrate classroom learning directly into their work/community context
- Mixed methods for diverse learners
- On-going participatory critical reflection
- Focus on competencies

www.sfu.ca/cscd/BoliviaCED
www.decbolivia.org



In our own words ...

After 30 years of not studying I have had to adapt to the program. Before the course the only way we thought about community development was what was the municipality going to do for us. We didn't talk about the **many resources that we do have.**

—Diosnese, Indigenous Leader

As a sociologist I was not well versed in development theory but with this course I see that it's not just about economic development. I see beyond the economic. The tools are very useful and give the theory **relevance in simple, practical ways.** It is a rich experience.

—Erik, AIPE Leader

We have been learning about community capital and how important it is to include everyone in the projects we do. **This learning is giving great strength to my organization.**

—Beatrice, NGO Leader

The program has filled out many spaces in my training as a teacher—I have learned that **it is always possible** to apply what I learn.

—Nancy, NGO Leader

Many of us have not finished high school. We are happy to participate ... and we are learning to respond to the community. But we still need to question what do we mean by development? We don't want others to tell us what kind of economic projects we should have—CED can **help us decide what we should do and who will benefit.**

—Ricardo, Indigenous Leader

This program is good because of its horizontal perspectives and the emphasis on **how to mobilize community assets.**

—Gabriel, Community Organizer

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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