

A brief overview of ICDP in Latin America

Lailah Armstrong, October 2008

ICDP has been developing in Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil and in these countries I trained local teams up to trainer level, in addition to facilitators and promoters.

PARAGUAY, ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL – since 2002 ICDP has been active with small scale projects so far, with the exception of one large scale project (61 facilitators and 226 promoters, 2717 caregivers and 4308 children) during 2005 in Santo Angelo, Brazil, sponsored by the Bernard van Leer Foundation. There have been no projects in 2007 in Brazil, but I have this year started negotiations with Save the Children UK and Unicef for cooperation on a project in Recife.

In Colombia, Guatemala and El Salvador we developed large scale projects in cooperation with Unicef. In Colombia we have a registered ICDP organization.

COLOMBIA - We have been active since 1995. Work is ongoing in 7 provinces/departments.

Province of Boyacá:

Four years ago the ICDP implementation took place all over the province (123 towns) with sponsorship from Unicef and the Governor's office; the programme has continued to be implemented ever since. This year (2008) The Boyaca Department received the National Award for Human Rights for its work with ICDP. I was invited recently by the First Lady of the province to attend the Award ceremony in early November 2008.

Province of Nariño:

ICDP has been spreading in this province since 2002 through the Health Ministry and ICBF, when the programme implementation took place in 64 towns; sponsorship from Unicef in the first and second year and in the last four years ICDP implementation is sustained by the local networks.

In 2007 51 towns were involved in ICDP work through the health sector. The Education sector started to be involved in 2008. We held refresher workshops each year.

Province of Huila:

ICDP has been implemented all over the provinces in 37 towns, through health, education and social services – these Ministries institutionalized ICDP as one of their program in 2006/7. Sponsorship is by Ecopetrol and Unicef, as well as local ministries.

In 2008 we are training new teams from the Health sector as well as holding refresher workshops for promoters and facilitators from education and social networks. I held several workshops; and also had a number of meetings with Unicef establishing Evaluation procedures. The Huila project is being evaluated by a team of external experts. A network for parents is being set up to sustain ICDP on community levels. A team of local trainers for Huila will also be established by May 2009 to ensure future sustainability.

Province of Choco:

Our training workshops and the implementation of ICDP has been sponsored and coordinated by Unicef from their office in the capital town of Quibdo. ICDP has spread to 4000 families at risk in this province, the poorest area in Colombia.

In May 2008 I held a workshop for facilitators in Quibdo, when we also made plans with Unicef to consolidate the work accomplished and to carry out an evaluation of the achievements.

Province of Santander:

Several meetings with the Health Ministry took place in Bucaramanga, the capital of the province, last of which I attended in September 2008. As result ICDP training workshops will be held in Bucaramanga mid October 2008, followed by implementation of ICDP in 16 municipalities of the province over a period of 4 months.

In November 2008 I will hold a workshop for the leadership. Plans will then be made for 2009.

Province of Quindio:

In the Colegio Luis Arango Cardona, La Tebaida, Quindio, near Amanecer we developed an ICDP pilot project using a new model of implementation specifically adapted for use with school teachers; it has proven to be very successful and currently plans are being made for a follow up in 2009. We are currently negotiating further developments with the Mayor and the town council. In addition, there is a project with indigenous Embera Chami community.

Province of Antioquia:

ICDP has been developing mainly in the capital town of Medellin, and only to a lesser degree in other towns of the province. Developments started in 1996 and have continued ever since.

In Medellin I formed 3 trainers, dozens of facilitators, through the University of Luis Amigo and a local NGO, called FAN.

I will hold a workshop in November 2008 which will be attended by teams from both organizations.

GUATEMALA

We have been active 2 years. The ICDP programme is implemented through two major networks: Plan International and SOSEP (social services). Around two thousand children have been reached so far by targeting the poorest areas of the country.

There were many positive comments from all those involved and the overall evaluation of these first projects carried out in Guatemala showed promising results. Participants told of their work in the field sharing moving stories and showing great personal commitment. A father that was interviewed on his way to an ICDP gathering said:

"I am going to a very important meeting, it is about a programme where I have experienced something I never had as a child which is to be appreciated for the fact that I am a person; this is what we need in our community and these guidelines in the booklet I received need to reach not only families and children but also the elderly in our community as they need to be appreciated just as much. "

Unicef has changed leadership which is delaying the progress.

EL SALVADOR:

We have been active 3 years. The purpose was to train 30 persons as ICDP facilitators and 60 as ICDP promoters to implement ICDP with families at risk through different local networks. Unicef acts as the bridge between ICDP and the local networks.

Trained agents are from ISNA (social services), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Red Solidaria and several NGOs. ICDP was implemented through day care centres, with families in poor communities and pre schools. The coordinator for ICDP in the Ministry of Education, Edith Vasquez said:

"The trained teachers are very enthusiastic about the impact of the ICDP programme in schools. They noticed positive changes in the behaviour of children and an improvement in their academic achievement. They also noted more commitment from parents for cooperation with the teachers. Next year they want to reach out with ICDP to 125 schools."

ICDP continues to be spread in 2008 and it has officially become a national programme coordinated by ISNA (Social Services).

I will hold a workshop for trainers in the capital of the country, San Salvador, in November 2008.