



SUCCESS STORY

Partnerships Make the Difference

Community groups are integrating into productive export chains

Wilma Rocha is a well-respected member of the Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) Mothers' Club, a community-based organization in the city of El Alto, one of Bolivia's most conflict-ridden and poorest cities.



Photo: USAID/Walter Mur

Embroiderers from Nueva Esperanza work hard to meet their export orders.

Under her leadership, and with USAID's help providing sewing equipment and technical assistance in business planning and management, 75 women have moved from unemployment to embroidering high-end clothing for Bolivia's largest textile exporter. This alliance generates orders of 15,000 garments each month. In addition, Nueva Esperanza has received orders from two more buyers, which will increase production by 30 percent.

Promoting strategic alliances between small community businesses such as Nueva Esperanza and exporters is a key part of

USAID's strategy to support value-added manufactured exports and job creation in urban areas such as El Alto. In this way, smaller businesses connect with export opportunities through larger businesses. USAID helps small businesses improve productivity and quality or expand operations to meet the new market's demands. At USAID business development centers in El Alto, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz, small producers connect with strategic partners and gain techniques and skills to enhance competitiveness.

Strategic alliances between exporters and local organizations boost employment and income.
"Now, we have our own business and we thank God for this opportunity," said Wilma Rocha, whose organization now partners with a major exporter.

In 2005, exports of USAID-assisted firms generated \$10.4 million, equal to nearly half of all Bolivian exports in the four sectors USAID focused on: textiles and apparel, jewelry, wood, and leather products. Export promotion efforts brought an additional \$729,800 in local sales, incorporated 31 new small businesses such as Nueva Esperanza into export chains, and generated 291 new jobs. When linked with significant market opportunities, mothers' clubs and other small businesses can become important sources of income for their members. By connecting them with new markets, USAID helps Bolivians like Wilma build a better future for their families.