

# Paraguay ISRP D'14

## THE PARAGUAY FOUR

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## Overview

Worcester Polytechnic Institute is an American institute of higher learning in Worcester, Massachusetts that requires two main projects prior to graduation. The Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) is typically completed during a student's junior year, where small teams of students along with a faculty advisor conduct research directed at a specific problem or need while working with a project sponsor. Upon the completion of the project, the teams of students deliver findings and recommendations through formal reports and oral presentations to the project sponsor.

Four students from WPI from various backgrounds spent seven weeks in Paraguay working on a project with Fundacion Paraguaya and immersing themselves in the Paraguayan culture. With minimum backgrounds in the Spanish language, the four students (two Americans, one Brazilian and one Indian) lived in the Intern House of Fundacion Paraguaya. The objective of the project was to improve the monitoring system in place for tracking income poverty in the Poverty Stoplight Program developed by Fundacion Paraguaya. This was done using several methods, such as learning about the current monitoring system used, attending presentations by different stakeholders in Fundacion Paraguaya, researching information about a robust monitoring system and shadowing the micro-credit officers and asesoras (advisors) of the organization for two weeks. The project ended with a final presentation in Spanish to the managers of Fundacion Paraguaya, after a period of seven weeks.

The first two weeks involved us taking Spanish classes for two hours in the morning, followed by presentations from different departments within Fundacion Paraguaya about their daily routine and goals for the year, researching robust monitoring systems via textbooks, online sources and professionals and immersing ourselves in the Paraguayan culture.

The next two weeks comprised us shadowing asesoras, or advisors, at the Fundacion Paraguaya offices in San Lorenzo and Luque. The group of four was split into two pairs, each pair visiting an office location for a week, then switching the following week. We then learned and observed the micro-credit process and overall culture of Fundacion Paraguaya.

The week of April 13 to April 19 is Semana Santa (Saint's week), where businesses close starting mid-day Wednesday until Friday to observe Good Friday and the Easter holiday. We used half of that week to ask questions to some of the upper level managers in the headquarters office, also known as the Casa de Matriz.

The sixth week was spent at the intern house organizing our thoughts, observations and findings about the current monitoring system, an ideal robust monitoring system. The time was used to complete and revise our deliverables, and prepare our final presentation.

Each week comprised of weekly skype meetings with both our WPI advisor, Professor Traver, and our advisor for the project, Dorothy Wolf. Professor Traver and Dorothy Wolf organized our project and together helped develop the agenda/ itineraries for the seven weeks in relation to the project.

We were required to work from 8am to 6pm on weekdays, and had the weeknights and weekends free to either do homework or explore our new surroundings. Some of the cultural immersion activities we participated in include dining at various restaurants, attending social events in

Asuncion, taking salsa lessons, exploring sites outside of Asuncion, indulging in Paraguayan food and history, participating in community service, and establishing friendships with people from all over the globe.

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# Fundacion Paraguay

## COMPANY PROFILE

Fundacion Paraguaya was founded by Martin Burt, a native Paraguayan, and started out originally as Paraguay's first microenterprise development program. It then expanded to a non-profit development organization with a presence in both Latin America and Africa. The original micro-enterprise developed into a high impact social organization when the founder realized that poverty isn't easily combated by simply giving out money but by understanding the various factors that contribute to poverty and developing self-autonomy among those who wish to leave poverty. The company aligns its vision and goals with the "teach a man to fish" philosophy.

The mission statement of Fundacion Paraguaya is to develop and implement practical, innovative and sustainable solutions which eliminate poverty and create decent living conditions for every family.

There are three programs dedicated to this mission: the self-sustaining agricultural schools, the microcredit program, and the poverty stoplight program. The organization also has affiliations with various organizations across international grounds.

### Self-Sustaining Agricultural School



## PROGRAM: POVERTY ELIMINATION PROGRAM

The Poverty Stoplight Program helps families under the poverty line permanently get out of poverty by having them self-diagnose their level of poverty, using a survey administered on an HP tablet, and develop their own customized intervention plan with the help of the advisor from Fundacion Paraguaya to get them out of poverty.

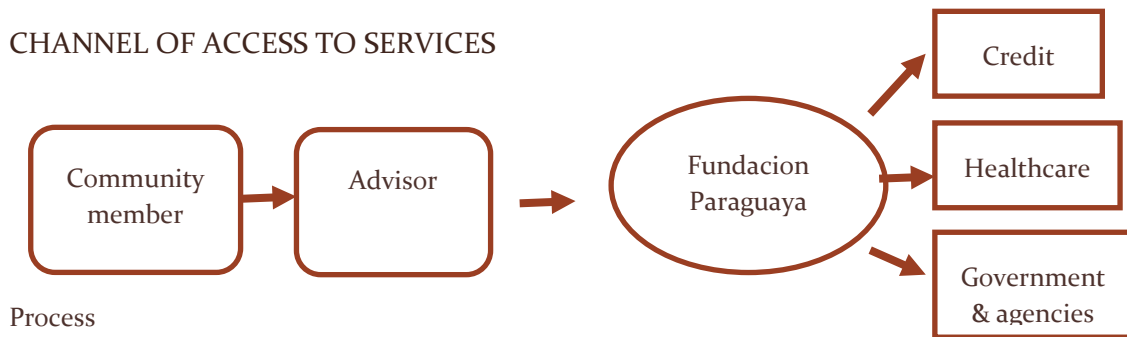
### Impacts:

1. Helps families self-diagnose their poverty level
2. Provides tools necessary to help families get themselves out of poverty
3. Helps families stay out of poverty

### Tools Used Include:

- Poverty Stoplight Application
  - Survey that assesses poverty over six dimensions: (1) income & employment, (2) health & environment, (3) education & culture, (4) housing & infrastructure, (5) self awareness & motivation, and (6) organization and participation, which is further divided into 50 indicators. Each indicator has three different levels, depicted by the colors of a stoplight. Green indicates that the family is not considered poor in reference to that specific indicator, and is the common goal for families. Yellow indicates a status of poverty, but the family is close to getting out of poverty. Red indicates a status of extreme poverty, the worst situation of the three, where a family is far from being out of poverty.
- Advisors ( Asesoras)
  - Women that are trained to work with the participants of the program. They provide the families access to the self-assessment tool, and provide them assistance with coming up with an intervention plan to get themselves out of poverty.
- HP software
  - Software used to monitor the participants of the Poverty Stoplight program, submit reports by both advisors and top level management, analyze data from clients, and create geographical maps of levels of poverty in communities based on indicators and dimensions.

## CHANNEL OF ACCESS TO SERVICES



### Process

1. Local members of a community are trained to be advisors for Fundacion Paraguaya and typically work and live in the communities of the clients they will serve. This is so that they can work with the clients at a more personal level and relate to their situation better.
2. Advisors are assigned to approximately 100 women, who are members of the Women's Committee, a village banking system used in the micro-credit program at Fundacion Paraguaya.
3. Community members are individually selected from an established Women's Committee in Fundacion Paraguaya into the Poverty Stoplight Program.
4. Advisor visits the community member's home and together they fill out a socioeconomic survey and poverty stoplight survey via tablet or paper.
  - a. Poverty baseline is developed based on a formula considering size of the family household and region of residence. The income gap is identified between the family's current income and the baseline income necessary for that particular family to be above the poverty line.
  - b. Together with the asesora, the community member develops an intervention plan to permanently overcome poverty.
    - i. Intervention plans can include additional income generating activities that can be used by the family members, ways to access items and services necessary to get out of poverty.
5. The asesora monitors the family's progress by visiting them every six months and filling out another socioeconomic survey and poverty stoplight survey.
  - a. The results from the first and second surveys are compared to identify the type of progress if any accomplished, check to see the success of the intervention plan, stability of income and identify alternative solutions or develop new intervention plans if the first one was unsuccessful or new problems occurred.
6. After a year of stability, an advisor initiates the process of certifying and verifying the family is permanently out of poverty.
  - a. A certificate of program completion is given to families that successfully stayed out of poverty in all 50 indicators.

## TEAM

There are 25 Regional Offices throughout Paraguay:

Asuncion, Villa Elisa, Luque, San Lorenzo, Ita, Caacupe, Caaguazu, Coronel Oviedo, Carapegua, Ybucui, San Ignacio, Encarnacion, Ciudad del Este, Chaco, Mariano Roque Alonso, Santani, Paraguari, Lambare, Pilar, San Pedro, Concepcion, Curuguaty, Villa Ygatimi

Faculty throughout the regional offices include:

Office Managers, Advisors, Credit Officers, Poverty Elimination Coordinator, Regional Office Manager

Personnel relevant to the Poverty Stoplight in the Headquarters Office include:

Programs Coordinator – Nancy Ramos

General Manager – Luis Fernando

FOUNDER: MARTIN BURT



## PROJECT: ROBUST MONITORING SYSTEM

The Poverty Stoplight Program is a relatively new program that has been running for roughly three years. The goal of the project was to develop a robust monitoring system that focused on process monitoring of income poverty within the Poverty Stoplight Program. The ideal monitoring system should be able to identify whether or not the Poverty Stoplight Program, in terms of income, is being implemented as planned. Our observations and impression of the current monitoring system and suggestions for improvement were incorporated into three deliverables, established to facilitate the accomplishment of the overall goal (as mentioned above) along with a shadowing report and a suggested OPPM that would be separate and specific for the Poverty Stoplight Program. The following pages include the deliverables and reports from the course of the project.

The overall project proposal is listed below:

1. Students will "shadow" a microcredit officer to understand first-hand:
  - The microcredit concept and how it is implemented using the village banking methodology.
  - What the Poverty Stoplight program is, how it supplements the village banking program and how it is implemented on the ground
  - Profiles of the foundation's clients.
2. Students will review literature on what a robust monitoring system should look like for a social project, in terms of activities, outputs, and outcomes.
3. After having seen the Poverty Stoplight activities being implemented on the ground, and after reviewing documents which describe the Poverty Stoplight objectives and success indicators, as well as project activities and outputs, students will critically analyze the current monitoring process system being implemented by foundation employees implementing the Poverty Stoplight program (keeping in mind what a robust monitoring system should look like) specifically in terms of how the monitoring system currently being implemented answers these questions:
  - What activity or output is supposed to happen?
  - When is it supposed to happen?
  - How do we know it is happening? (what does monitoring consist of?)
  - Who monitors this?
  - What "monitoring products" are produced?
  - Who reads/analyzes these "monitoring products"?
  - Who summarizes & draws conclusions from "monitoring products"?
  - How is collected information and lessons learned from "monitoring products" fed back into project to improve it?
  - Who is ultimately responsible the that monitoring process takes place?
4. Students will make recommendations to improve the monitoring process system of the Poverty Stoplight program, including how we can use ICT technology to improve the monitoring system. (We are especially interested in making the monitoring system friendlier to use for all involved, ensuring data collection accuracy, triangulation and verification of data being reported, being able to store a large amount of data that can be easily located, and capturing lessons learned so that everyone in the system can learn from them).

5. The recommendations would include designing sample forms that employees up and down the line of command could fill out so as to implement and streamline the monitoring system.
6. Points 4 & 5 would (ideally) be presented in Spanish...
7. Students would give a presentation (PPT) to Fundación Paraguaya's staff with their findings and recommendations.

## SHADOWING REPORT

### Shadowing Experience

We spent two weeks shadowing advisors who are employees of Fundación Paraguaya, tasked with providing loans to the women's committees and carrying out the Poverty Stoplight Program. We split into two teams and spent one week in the Luque office, and then switched the next week to the San Lorenzo office.

### Activities carried out during the shadowing experience

- 1) The team sat in on women's committee meetings organized by the advisors.
- 2) During the formation of a new women's committee, the team observed and helped fill out socio-economic surveys for the microcredit program, which had questions regarding income and information regarding certain other poverty indicators, such as the health of the family and the status of the household.
- 3) At the office, the team observed our advisor fill out the levels for the 50 indicators in the Poverty Stoplight Program for five clients.
- 4) The team observed the chain of command in the offices.
- 5) The team watched a women's committee being transferred from one advisor to another, due to the restrictions on the number of clients imposed on an advisor (1000 clients max per advisor).
- 6) The team watched how the advisor assigns credit to a women's committee, and how the committee distributes the money amongst its members.
- 7) The team spoke to some of the clients about their opinions on the microcredit program as a whole.
- 8) The team observed the work environment in each office.

### Opinions/Concerns

- 1) The clients do not like to fill out lengthy microcredit socio-economic surveys too often.
- 2) The advisors do not like to carry out the microcredit socio-economic surveys too frequently, as they do not observe much improvement within just a month. They only plan on doing the surveys every 6 months.
- 3) Surveys should be done individually rather than in a group setting, as it gives the clients more privacy to be candid with their answers.

### Types of Data Gathered towards Final Project

- 1) The chain of command in the office

- 2) Monthly timeline for the advisors and office managers for completing specific objectives with regard to the microcredit and Poverty Stoplight Program.
- 3) The amount of money clients are allowed to borrow in each microcredit cycle.
- 4) Goals and objectives for each advisor regarding income above poverty line, number of income sources, and all 50 indicators.
- 5) Goals and objectives of the office managers with regard to the microcredit program and the Poverty Stoplight program.

### Lessons Learned

1. Firstly and most importantly, what is on paper (in the Poverty Stoplight Application Manual) does not match what is being put into practice:
  - a. The timeline for getting a client out of poverty varies from paper to practice. For instance, the Poverty Stoplight Manual does not give a specific timeline for the activities to get a client out of poverty, while in practice, there is a timeline to get a client out of poverty.
  - b. The use of the tablets in the field not as common as mentioned in the manual.
  - c. The advisors have more liberty and freedom to make their own schedules and to meet their monthly goals than expected.
  - d. There is unnecessary repetition in documenting data. For instance, the socio-economic surveys are documented four times:
    - i. Manually on paper
    - ii. In a computer software program like Excel
    - iii. On Java, the Fundacion's own server
    - iv. On the HP server
    - v. In addition, they have to email this information to the office manager
    - vi. Information and data are not easily accessible. For example:
- 2) Intervention plans created for the Poverty Stoplight participants. No records of the plans exist at the offices, except a picture taken on the advisor's phone.
- 3) ii. OPPMs of the office managers.
- 4) Advisors are just regular people trying to make a living, and they are not too different from their clients in terms of their background.
- 5) The advisors' jobs involve a lot more data entry and desk work in comparison to field work.
- 6) The advisors do not work with clients in the lower levels of poverty in the Poverty Stoplight Program, but rather with "low-hanging fruits", as mentioned in several Fundacion Paraguaya documents.
- 7) Clients may not give accurate information if they feel embarrassment about their living situation.
- 8) Credit-giving and microfinances are crucial for the success of the Poverty Stoplight Program.
- 9) The advisors do not prefer using the HP tablets, as the software is slow and certain neighborhoods aren't safe for carrying tablets.

### Suggestions on how FP can Improve Shadowing Experience

1. The timing of the shadowing could be improved, so that the team gets to see the advisors doing work related to our project.
  - a. Sometime during the middle of the month, so that the advisors aren't rushed to reach their goals.

- b. A couple of days shadowing the advisors, followed by a couple of days off to process the information learned out on the field.
    - c. Having the whole shadowing experience earlier in the term. This would give the team a better understanding of the client advisor relationship sooner.
  2. Shadowing the office or regional managers in addition to the advisors would be helpful.

Month 1

Months 2-6

Months 6-24

DELIVERABLE 1

Stage 1:  
Approach and  
Diagnosis of the  
Poverty Levels

Stage 2:  
Implementation  
of the  
Intervention  
Plan

Stage 3:  
Certification and  
follow-  
up/maintaining  
families out of  
poverty

•Steps

- Advisors are assigned to geographical areas in rural or urban-rural areas.
- Each advisor is assigned targets or goals like the number of families who overcame income poverty
- The advisors approach the women who are participating in the village banking or the Women's Entrepreneur's Committee.
- All women in committee take social economic survey to determine baseline income.
- Once accepted, the particular woman of the house participate in a graphical survey to self-determine their level of income poverty.<sup>1</sup>
- **INPUTS:** Advisors, HP Tablet and app, social economic survey
- **ACTIVITIES:** Using the tablet to self-evaluate and determine income poverty level.
- **OUTPUTS:** The family's Poverty Stoplight is created. Baseline has been established
- **OUTCOME:** The family is aware of their income poverty situation and the income gap<sup>2</sup> is established.
- **MONITORING:** Choose valid candidates after income levels had been determined

•Steps

- Income growth is prioritized so that focus can avert to other indicators
- Using the baseline, a personalized intervention plan is created<sup>3</sup>
- The intervention plan is implemented by the family with guidance from the advisor
- Focus is on clear communication between the advisor and the family.
- **INPUTS:** Advisors, loans, grants, personalized business plan
- **ACTIVITIES:** Advisors work with the family to create the intervention plan
- **OUTPUTS:** All indicators turn green and family has an intervention plan
- **OUTCOME:** The family gains self-esteem and has a new business savvy.
- **MONITORING:** Follow up visits are done every 6 months when they complete the 2nd social economic survey

•Steps

- Advisor applies the 2nd Stoplight with the 3 income indicators<sup>4</sup> and discusses with office manager to check for progression.
- The auditing team selects families to be certified for leaving income poverty.
  - If all indicators are green and income is above income poverty line at the end of this period, they are granted certification.
- Follow up on certified families with an annual visit for the next three years to ensure that the family stays in the green for all indicators.
- **INPUTS:** Advisor, Office Manager, 2nd Poverty Stoplight application, audit team.
- **ACTIVITIES:** Application of the second or third Poverty Stoplight survey if necessary
- **OUTPUTS:** Certification of family being out of poverty
- **OUTCOME:** Provides a means to track sustained improvement in a family's income poverty level. Family maintains themselves out of income poverty. Fundacion Paraguaya verifies that the family has completed Poverty Stoplight Program.
- **MONITORING:** 2nd Stoplight is applied after 12 months

## Appendix

- 1.) A certain number of women are chosen to participate in the next survey who are most qualified. 20% are chosen by F.P. and 80% are chosen by the advisors. People who qualify are those who are yellow. The women can have debt, but if they have a bad credit reputation they are not qualified. There is a maximum allowable debt of 3,000,000.00 Gs above which a woman is no longer eligible to receive credit.
- 2.) The income gap is how much money a family needs to make to reach above the poverty level, specific to their region (metropolitan, urban/rural, rural) elaborate on what poverty situation is.
- 3.) A personalized business plan can involve improving their own business or coming up with ideas for new sources of income. This involves credit, savings, training, balance budget sheet
- 4.) Three income indicators: income above the poverty line, stable income (income remains relatively the same between 3-6 months), sources of income (various sources of income throughout family household).

Notes:

Poverty Stoplight imitates a traffic light in which clients are categorized into three colors.

- Red: This category symbolizes cases of extreme poverty and worst situations within the various indicators such as very low income, only one source of income and income varying from month to month.
- Yellow: This category symbolizes cases of moderate poverty or simply poverty, representing the mild situations within the various indicators. Those in yellow are closer to getting out of poverty and closer to “green”.
- Green: This category symbolizes those above poverty and represents the ideal or best situation within the various indicators. This is the end goal.

## DELIVERABLE 2

Specific Questions that Process Monitoring System should Answer

1. How was the Poverty Stoplight Program intended to be implemented?
2. Who is ultimately responsible for making sure everything goes according to plan?
3. How does one know when activities are carried out? And if they are carried out correctly?
4. Who is involved in the Poverty Stoplight Program and what activities are they responsible for?
5. When are activities supposed to occur? When do they actually occur?
6. What were the main performance indicators that have been pre-established by the Poverty Stoplight Program and have they been met?
7. What are the gaps between program intent and implementation?
8. How does the implementation of the Poverty Stoplight program vary across different locations?
9. Are there standard procedures for activities? And if so what are they?
10. What components of the Poverty Stoplight Program need to be improved?
11. How can feedback from the Poverty Stoplight Program be incorporated back into the program to further enhance it?
12. What is the adequacy of resources, facilities and funding for the Poverty Stoplight Program and the efficiency of their use?
13. How is the quality of implementation of the Poverty Stoplight Program?
14. How well is the Poverty Stoplight Program organized and the clarification of staff functions?
15. Which external factors have influenced the service delivery of the Poverty Stoplight Program?



## DELIVERABLE 3

### Part A: Map Current Monitoring Process



Summary: The type of data currently being collected for monitoring include results from completed poverty stoplight and socioeconomic surveys, detailed logs of client information recorded in excel documents, HP server and Internal Fundacion Paraguaya Java software, signed reports including OPPMs and journals from upper level management confirming the occurrence of lower level activities, and certification of interventions confirming that clients have permanently left poverty.

Part B: Critically analyze the current process monitoring system being implemented by foundation employees

### Suggestions & Critiques

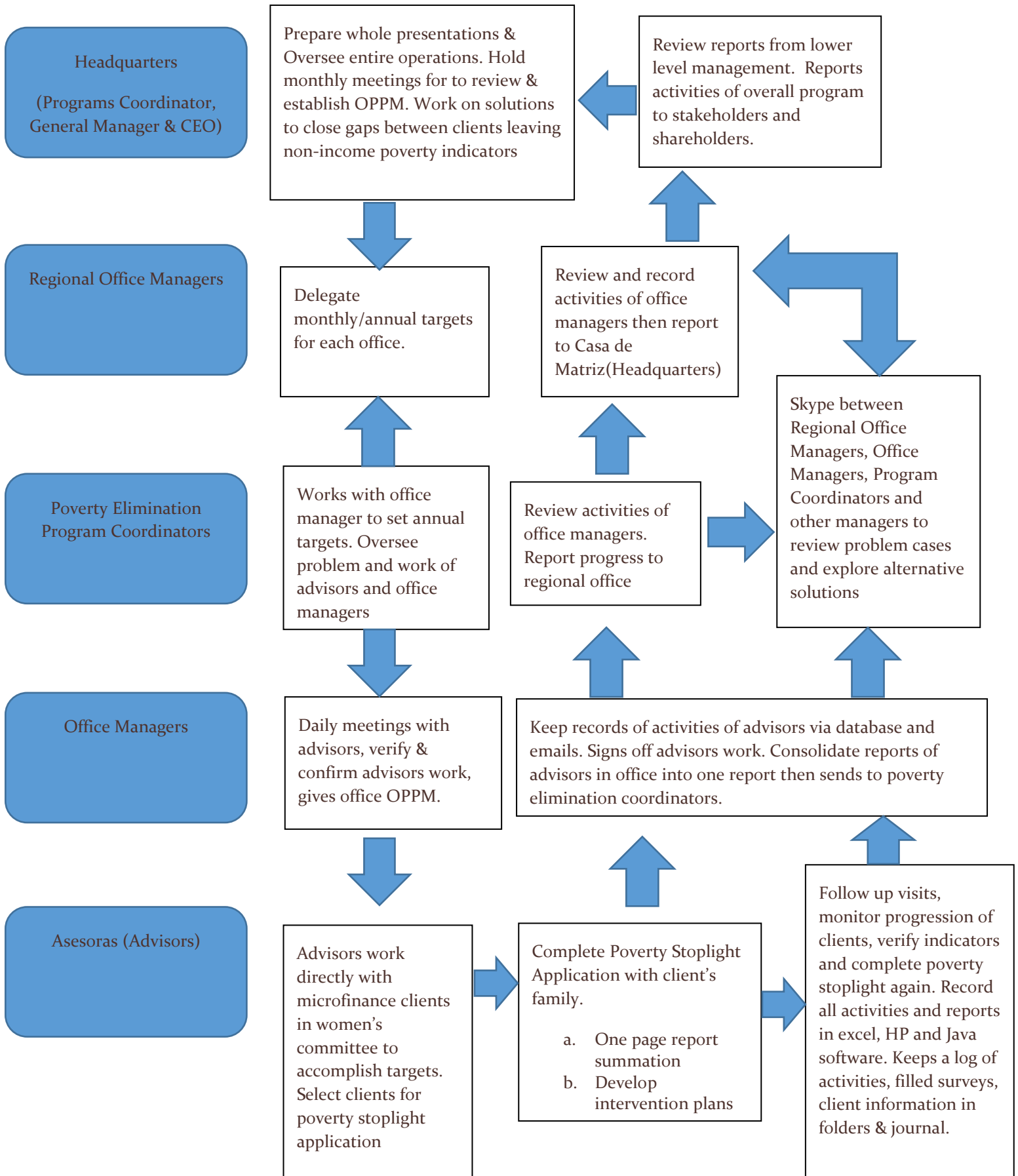
1. Currently, the microcredit documents and Poverty Stoplight documents are filed in the same folder. For easier access and segregation of the programs, it would be advisable to have two separate folders for each client involved in both programs.
2. A copy of the family's intervention plan, along with the family's current situation as described by the advisor in a brief paragraph on one page should be uploaded or at least put into the family's specific Poverty Stoplight folder.
3. The Office Manager should sign and date the intervention plans. The date that it is approved is recorded online or in an excel sheet and that would be a record of the actual monitoring that was done by the manager.
4. The advisor also dates the day that the intervention plan is approved and records that online in an excel sheet or in some manner. Discrepancies would show up if there were differences in dates between office managers and advisors.
5. Advisors should have one weekly meeting with the office manager to solely discuss improvements or new goal achievements of their respective clients in the Poverty Stoplight Program. Improvements can be based off of the responses from the feedback surveys.[See point 7]
6. There should be a separate standard Poverty Stoplight Program OPPM for the advisors with goals in terms of participants, duties and milestones for that fiscal year.
7. During the implementation of the program, at the 6-month or 12-month mark, a feedback survey should be filled out by all of the Poverty Stoplight Program clients, where concerns about the program will be addressed. This will be carried out by someone other than an advisor, possibly the Poverty Elimination Coordinator, to avoid bias. The survey is filed in the client's folder and copies are handed over to the office manager to later discuss with advisors during weekly meetings.
8. After the completion of the program, all clients successfully out of poverty fill out another feedback survey right before certification. Ideally, the feedback survey would have questions about how the program could be improved, contact information for at least one other person who the client thinks would benefit from the program, and any other comments or concerns about the program. This will be carried out by someone other than an advisor, possibly the Poverty Elimination Coordinator, to avoid bias. The results will be recorded in the client's folder for future reference and used as feedback mechanism by the managers for the process assessment.

## Appendix

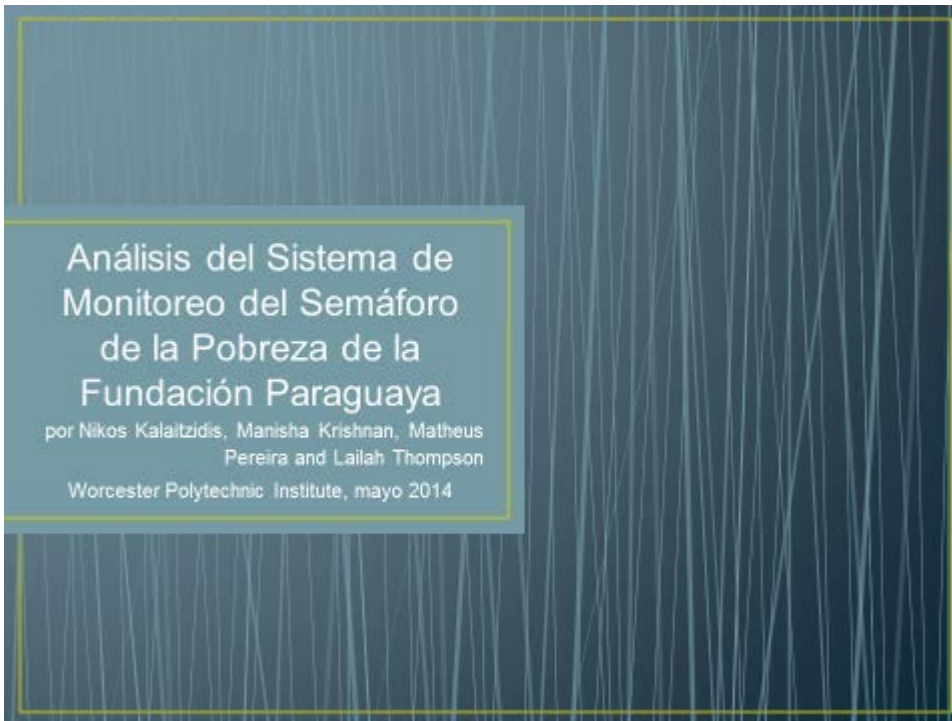
- A. Socioeconomic survey includes questions about income and members of the household. Socioeconomic survey is used to determine income gap between family's current income and monthly income necessary to be above poverty line. It gives baseline information for the weekly/monthly income, number of income sources and a few other select indicators.
- B. Certification of Intervention: After a client's family completely surpasses poverty line in income and all 50 indicators, typically after a year of participation in the Poverty Stoplight Program, they are selected by the certifying team. Certifying team then compares first and last socioeconomic survey to verify that family reached target income and remained above poverty. Certifying team goes through a checklist of documents including business/intervention plans originally created between client and advisor, information on activities actually done to boost income, copies of purchases and records along with supporting photos to completely certify that a family has permanently stayed out of poverty.

APPENDIX C is  
on Following  
Page

C. Chain of Command / Structural Hierarchy of Organization



## FINAL PRESENTATION



### Página de índice

<u>Metas de la pasantía</u>	<u>Tabla de contenidos</u>
•Comprensión del concepto del:	•Pregunta de investigación
•Semáforo de Pobreza	•Metodología de la investigación
•Programa de Microcrédito	•Insumos/Actividades
•Entender en que consiste un sistema de monitoreo	•Resultados
•Análisis del sistema de monitoreo actual	•Propósitos del proyecto
•Recomendaciones al sistema de monitoreo	•Sistema actual de monitoreo
	•Recomendaciones para mejorar el sistema de monitoreo actual
	•Plan de negocios
	•OPPM propuesta para el Semáforo
	•Preguntas y Respuestas

## La pregunta de la investigación: *¿Cómo se puede mejorar el sistema de monitoreo del Semáforo de Pobreza?*

- Para tener un sistema de monitoreo bueno para cualquier programa, es necesario responder algunas preguntas sobre el programa
- Preguntas de monitoreo buenas tienen que comunicar el estándar y la dimensión de la prestación de servicios.
- Tiene que llegar a la población meta:
  - Mujeres abajo de la línea de la pobreza
  - Quienes quieren salir de la pobreza

## Metodología de la Investigación

- Lectura de libros de textos
- Lectura de un curso en línea
- Recursos internos

- "Sombreado" a las asesoras
- Asistir a presentaciones
- Entrevistas con los empleados

- Desarrollo de preguntas
- Creación de un sistema que contesta las preguntas

Estudio

Observación

Conceptualización

## Insumos y Actividades

### Sistema de monitoreo actual

• Consiste de la confirmación de 3 etapas:

1. Aplicación del Semáforo de Pobreza
2. Desarrollo de un Plan de negocios para salir de la pobreza
3. Certificación de la Eliminación de la pobreza

### Ajustes propuestas

• Preguntas:

- Responsabilidad
- Tiempo del suceso
- Procedimientos normas
- Adecuación, eficiencia
- Realización
- Retroalimentación

Un sistema de Monitoreo contesta:  
*Qué? Quién? Cómo? Dónde? Por Qué?*

## Resultados/Outputs

• Los Resultados para el Monitoreo:

1. Encuesta Socioeconómica
2. Semáforo de Pobreza de la familia
3. Plan de Negocio
4. Reuniones semanales solamente para el Semáforo con el gerente
5. Certificación

• Cómo Monitorear:

- ✓ OPPM, Plan de Negocio, Reuniones con el gerente

• Razones:

1. Saber la diferencia entre intención y implementación
2. Organización y clarificación para los empleados
3. Saber los factores externos que afectan el proceso

## Propósitos del Proyecto

- Evaluación de los resultados
- Evaluación del programa
- Alinear con la misión de organización

¿Cuales son los principales indicadores de éxito que han sido pre-establecidos para el Semáforo de Pobreza? ¿ Han sido cumplidos?

- Propósitos propuesta contra Propósitos actuales
- Llevar un registro de actividades, insumos y resultados

¿Como se puede utilizar la información sobre las cosas que necesitan mejorarse en la implementación del programa para mejorar dichos pasos?

- Seguir mejorando
- encuestas de retroalimentación
- Responsables Adicional

¿ Cómo es la calidad de la implementación en terreno del Semáforo de Pobreza ?

- Eficiencia
- Comentario de clientes

¿ Cuales factores externos influyen en la implementación del Semáforo de Pobreza en el terreno?

- Otra cosas que afectado resultados
- Crear un OPFM nuevo para cada año

## El sistema actual de monitoreo

- 1) La aplicación del Semáforo
  - Las encuestas completadas se mantienen en el archivo del cliente.
  - El gerente de la oficina
- 2) Los Planes de Negocios
  - El gerente repasa el diario de la asesora.
  - Modifica el plan de negocios
- 3) La salida permanente de la pobreza
  - Certificación
  - La visita anual



## Recomendaciones para ajustar la implementación del programa del Semáforo

- Separación del Semáforo de Pobreza y microfinanzas
- Plan de Negocios
  - Entrega del plan por Excel
  - Grabación del gerente y la asesora
- Reuniones semanales entre las asesoras y el gerente
- Que un OPPM única del Semáforo de la Pobreza esté desarrollado
- Que los clientes tengan la oportunidad de proveer retroalimentación

## Propósitos proyectados del monitoreo

- ❖ Agregación de elementos al Sistema de Monitoreo que permite:
  - La aclaración de las responsabilidades mejores
  - La aclaración del tiempo en el cual las actividades y metas deben ser cumplidas
  - Teniendo por escrito procedimientos y normas para aplicar el Semáforo en el terreno
  - Volver más eficiente el sistema del monitoreo
  - La seguridad que monitoreo constante de la implementación y los resultados del proyecto está ocurriendo

## Sugerencias sobre el Plan de Negocios para salir de la pobreza

1. Se debe poder ubicar el Plan de Negocios de un cliente en cualquier momento dentro de su archivo o en una base de datos de fácil acceso
2. Se puede hacer una copia del Plan de Negocios usando papel carbónico
3. El Plan de Negocios debería incluir un comentario de la asesora sobre la situación del cliente y su futuro
4. Algo más personal que muestra su relación con el cliente y su situación
5. El Plan de Negocios debe contener un apartado que la asesora puede actualizar cada rato con comentarios sobre si el Plan de Negocios está siendo implementado como planeado.
6. No hace falta que el Plan de Negocio tenga más de 5 o 6 frases

## En resumen

- Retos
  - Competencia de la lengua
  - Experiencia anterior
  - Siendo los pioneros
- Beneficios propios
  - Cultura y lengua
  - Amplitud de estudios
- Opiniones personales
  - Pros y contras de la pasantía
  - La Fundación Paraguaya

## Gratitudes especiales

Martin Burt y Dorothy Wolf

Miguel Angel Rivarola

Luis Fernando Sanabria

Sara Hooper

Nancy Ramos, Jimena Vallejos y Lourdes Agüero

Profesor Robert Traver

Julie Wilson

La Fundación Paraguaya

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

## Preguntas y Respuestas

Sample Forms Included in Recommendations to Monitoring & Evaluation System

One Page Project Manager (OPPM)

fundación paraguaya		Proyecto: Programa del Semáforo de Pobreza										Fecha: 05/06/14								
		Lider del Proyecto: Miguel A. Riverola																		
		Objetivo General: Monitor the Implementation of the Poverty Stoplight Program in regards to Income Poverty																		
Objetivos	Resultados/ Tareas Principales	Project Completed By: date												Dueno						
	<b>Encuesta Socioeconómica</b>																			
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Encuestar la cantidad de clientes	●																	A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Documentar los resultados en HP y Excel	●																	A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Registrar un copia de la encuesta socioeconómica en el archivo del cliente	●																	A	
	<b>Semáforo de Pobreza Encuesta</b>																			
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Cliente completa semáforo de pobreza encuesta	●																	A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Documentar los resultados en HP y Excel	●																	A	
	<b>Plan de intervenciones</b>																			
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Crear un plan de negocio/intervención con el cliente	●																	A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Guardar una copia del plan de negocio en el archivo del cliente	●																	A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Cliente completa el segundo semáforo de pobreza encuesta y socioeconómica encuesta							●											A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9 Documentar los resultados en HP y Excel							●											A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Registrar un copia de la encuesta socioeconómica en el archivo del cliente							●											A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11 Crear un plan alternativo de intervención si sea necesario, guardar en el archivo del cliente							●											A	
	<b>Otra Actividades</b>																			
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 Celebrar los reuniones semanales	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	A	B	
<input type="checkbox"/>	13 Revisar, firmar y fechar los informes terminados y planes negocios recibidos por las asesoras	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	B		
<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Documentar las suregencias importante, las mejoras y interes	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	B		
<input type="checkbox"/>	15 Enviar el informe mensual al supervisor directo	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	A	B	C D
<input type="checkbox"/>	16 Gestionar las encuestas de retroalimentación con los clientes anteriores que están de seis hasta doce meses en la programa							●											A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 Reportar la cantidad de clientes nuevos que han entrado el programa y la cantidad de clientes que han salido de la pobreza en el mes actual	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	A	B	C
<input type="checkbox"/>	18 Revisar, firmar y fechar los informes recibidos por los administración de nivel inferior	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	A	B	C D
<input type="checkbox"/>	19 Manejar las reuniones mensuales de Skype para solucionar/resolver los problemas actuales	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	A	B	C
<input type="checkbox"/>	20 Realizar una auditoría de los clientes en el programa del Semáforo de la Pobreza							●										A	B	C
<input type="checkbox"/>	21 Desarrollar formularios para realizar la retroalimentación y las mejoras en la programa							●											A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	22 Crear la OPPM para el próximo año																			A
<input type="checkbox"/>	23 El procedimiento para la Certificación Intervencion																		A	B
<input type="checkbox"/>	24 Visitas anuales a clientes que han salido pobreza de ingreso																	A	B	
Monitorear la programa Seguir mejorando el programa Asegurar el éxito del programa	<b>Tareas principales</b>	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Asesoras	Gerente de Oficina	Coordinadora de Comités	Coordinadora de Programa	Gerente Servicio		
	<b>Objetivos</b>																			
	<b>Resumen y pronostico</b>																			
	Summary																			

Business/ Intervention Plan

## **Planes de Negocios**

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Apellido: \_\_\_\_\_

Cedula de Identidad: \_\_\_\_\_ Data de Nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_

Ciudad de Nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_ Barrio : \_\_\_\_\_

Gastos Mensuales: \_\_\_\_\_ Semanales: \_\_\_\_\_

Ganos Mensuales: \_\_\_\_\_ Semanales: \_\_\_\_\_

Tipo de experiencia anterior de negocios: \_\_\_\_\_

Tipo de negocios que va a perseguir: \_\_\_\_\_

**Explicacion de la situacion de la familia en el momento y como va  
perseguir su plane de negocios entre los proximos meses:**

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Data: \_\_\_\_\_

Data: \_\_\_\_\_

Data: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Gerente**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Asesora**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Cliente**

## Exploring Paraguay

Paraguay; an island surrounded by land—as it is often described by the few writers and novelist that have discovered its hidden charm—cannot be classified so simply. There is a contradiction for almost every fact, a defying story for every historical moment, and a hero within every villain. It is landlocked between Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil. A beautiful country, sub-tropical and flat, with the scorching Chaco desert to the north, there is a certain rarity that sets it apart from its neighbors, such as how it is the only South American country with two official languages, Spanish and Guarani (the language of its pre-Colombian inhabitants). We were welcomed into the tranquil Paraguayan culture and learned much about the people, their history, and their land.

Besides traveling to the metropolitan towns of Luque and San Lorenzo for work, we were eager to explore Paraguay and dive into the culture. We traveled to both Encarnacion and Aregua, two beautiful cities both yielding bodies of waters and a uniqueness not found anywhere else. When we weren't drinking *tereré*, the national drink, or eating *chipa*, *mbeju*, or *mandioca*, we were learning common Guarani phrases. Our travels took us far and wide, landing us friendships with people from all over the world.



## TECHO- SEMANA SANTA

Known in English as *Saints Week*, from April 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, work and business in Paraguay stopped almost entirely. Every year during that week, *Un Techo para mi País* (TECHO), a non-profit organization, which helps build homes for families in need, does enormous construction projects in impoverished communities across South America with the help of local volunteers. For 50,000 Guaranies (less than 12 dollars), we joined the annual initiative and built 14 homes in four days along with 50 other Paraguayans for the community of Limpio. The homes were humble and the conditions in which we stayed in the community gave us a taste of how those families live every day. Nonetheless, the impact was immense to the families, and we made friendships that helped us through our time in Paraguay and remain to this day.



## ENCARNACION

Encarnacion is the closest thing to a beach town that Paraguay has. All the way to the south, on the border of Argentina is the Paraná River and the man-made San Jose beach, vacant in the crisp autumn air. During our visit, we stayed at the Kerana Hostel—suitably named from the Guarani word meaning “a good nights sleep”—and we ate the most delicious *asado*, which consists of heaps of grilled meats, always accompanied with cassava. Encarnacion exaggerates the calm vibe of the country and friendly attitude of the people.

A trip to Paraguay would not be complete without a visit to the ruins of the Jesuit Missionaries. Before their expulsion by the King of Spain, the Jesuits had created a peaceful utopia for themselves and the native Guarani that were willing to abide by their Christian laws. Well preserved, they are the oldest structures in Paraguay dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.



Ruins of Trinidad &  
Jesus de Tavarangue



## AREGUA

The town of Aregua is only within an hour's reach of the capital, Asuncion. However, that hour led us to a rural town filled with artisans, a grand Catholic church and a tropical park located by the green Ypacarai Lake. The artisans sold beautiful Guarani jewelry and herbal medicines along with interesting Latin American fusion artwork. Cerro Koi, just as much of an oddity as the town itself, has a type of hexagonal sandstone formation unique to Aregua and only two other places in the world. This town provided a breath of fresh air from the hectic and sometimes overwhelming city of Asuncion.



## ASUNCION

Asuncion is the capital city of Paraguay, the home of the President, the home of La Casa de Pasantes, our home for seven weeks. Asuncion is a city buzzing with activities to do and people to meet. During the time we spent in Asuncion, we went to concerts by the national orchestra and by *Sonidos de la Tierra*, Nu Guazu (a popular exercise park near the airport), dozens of restaurants ranging from Brazilian, Turkish and Japanese, to traditional Paraguayan, upscale shopping malls, a football match and even salsa classes. There was rarely a dull moment in Asuncion unless a huge tropical thunderstorm decided to welcome itself, and even then, we found something to do with



our fellow interns in La Casa de Pasantes. This was our home base; our stomping ground throughout the internship. Here we started and ended our stays, found the banks with the best exchange rate, the *Chiperos* with the freshest *chipa*, argued with unfair taxi drivers, ran from *fútbol fanaticos*, and walked home through a midnight flash flood.

The city is changing fast. Twenty years ago it would not have been recognizable to us and in twenty more it will probably be very different from what we are familiar with. What will stay are our friendships and memories, and our positive influence on the people of Fundacion Paraguaya.

## Summary of Experience

### NIKOS – FINAL THOUGHTS ON PARAGUAY ISRP 2014



My time in Paraguay has been an amazing experience. To be part of the small percent of people in the world that has the means of up and leaving everyday life and responsibilities to explore the world is a privilege, to say the least. There have been so many good moments. I cannot briefly summarize them all.

What stands out the most in my mind is the natural beauty of Paraguay. The Guarani knew of the treasure of their land. They had a unique connection to the flora and fauna, having named thousands upon thousands of native species of plants, birds and animals. For this reason, Guarani is the third most common language used for scientifically naming plants. It is onomatopoeic, so if I ever wondered about the name of the Gu'a parrots that woke me up in the morning in Ciudad del Este, or the origins of *tereré*, I needed only to mimic their sounds.

On this point, I am regretful that I could not experience more of the natural beauty that the country has to offer. Paraguay is not a tourist hot spot. Therefore, little is made public about its spectacular waterfalls and impossibly dense jungles. That is not to say that I had no outdoor fun at all. Climbing the highest peak in the country (a whopping 800 meter hill), gazing at the stars and drinking straight from a babbling brook was part of an unforgettable camping trip I took with local friends and a great end to the internship.

Of course, I would not have made those friends if it wasn't for our participation in the *Semana Santa* construction with TECHO. That weekend was one of the most fulfilling parts of my whole term. It made me so proud to be human; seeing so many young people helping out others for no personal gain of their own. Some perks I enjoyed during the weekend were showering in cold water, working barefoot in ankle deep mud and rain, getting some hot Paraguayan sun, and improving my Spanish exponentially. With that said, this is certainly not for everyone, because the work and the weather, rain or shine, are tough and unforgiving to those who do not appreciate it. Nonetheless, it is something I highly recommend the following IQPers to partake in.

As for the project itself, going into the field with the asesoras was an interesting addition. It is something that I suggest happens for the next group, but even further, to be able to go deep into the countryside. The experience would be more beneficial professionally, and unforgettable culturally. By the end of the internship, I had realized that I gained full understanding of the material that we, the WPI team, had been studying. It sounds like that shouldn't be a surprise but, like we were told during C-Term, we had spent much of our time swinging in the dark, hoping to land a shot on target since we were the pioneers of the Paraguay IQP site, or as we like to call

ourselves, the “Paraneers”. By the time we were writing up our final presentation and combining our deliverables, I felt I had truly absorbed knowledge about microfinancing, process monitoring, and Fundacion Paraguaya; not just facts and figures about the company and its goals, but actual knowledge that will cross over into my engineering profession. So much of what process monitoring is about is simply better ways to organize, the way one talks to clients and employees, and thinking outside the box. Sometimes these things were not obvious to me but then, when these little tips and tricks were picked up on, the response was almost instantaneously: ‘oh, that makes so much sense!’

I certainly owe a lot of thanks to Miguel Angel Rivarola, Sara Hooper and the rest of the FP staff for being so supportive. They say it is just Paraguayan hospitality to always lend an open hand. Whether it is or not, that is exactly what we received from everyone at Fundacion Paraguaya. I think that I can speak for all of us interns when I say that we were treated like family there.

All in all, I would highly recommend this IQP for the next generation. We will certainly need to give them some of the cultural and professional preparation that we didn’t get before they arrive, but it all gets better from here.

After my internship with Fundacion Paraguaya, I ended up working as an intern in Ciudad del Este, for Itaipu Binacional, the world’s largest hydroelectric dam, up until a few years ago, and the largest producer of clean energy to this day.

Manisha – From ISRP to IQP

My IQP experience in Paraguay undoubtedly comprised the seven most surreal weeks of my life. I



landed in Asuncion, with a vocabulary of Spanish words that I could count off on my hands. Over the course of seven weeks, I witnessed a rapid improvement in my Spanish skills. It was a personal accomplishment for me to give my final presentation in Spanish in front of native Spanish speakers, who complimented me on my much-improved Spanish. That would definitely have to be the high point of my experience professionally.

Our project involved improving the process monitoring system Fundacion Paraguaya had in place for their Poverty Stoplight program. The amount of work we had to do for our project was just right, in my opinion. Most of the challenges we faced as a group had to do with the fact that we were the first group from WPI working on this project, and we didn't have any standards to measure our progress against. I didn't know if we were working in the right direction, reading the right books and using the right information in crafting our deliverables sometimes. There were a few days when I felt like we weren't making any progress at all, but I was definitely glad that all the work we put in fell together in the end. Overall, the work experience was very satisfying, and I feel that our suggestions are going to make a difference in the working of Fundacion Paraguaya. I really owe a lot of what we accomplished to our project mentor, Miguel Angel Rivarola, for his valuable inputs on our deliverables, and for providing us with books that we could use in developing solutions to inherent problems in the system.

A lot of the employees at the Fundacion were very kind and helpful, and were sensitive to the fact that my Spanish skills were poor to begin with. They consciously made an effort to talk slowly and lucidly, so we could understand them more easily. We also had a lot of help from Sara Hooper for making travel arrangements for our weekend trips, and she also gave us a lot of suggestions for things we could do in our spare time.

Personally, my time in Paraguay instilled a serious wanderlust in me. Some of the places we visited over the weekends included the Jesuit Ruins in Encarnación, Areguá, and Mercado Cuatro. Cerro Koi, a beautiful hill we visited in Areguá, is made out of hexagonal stone formations that are unique to South America, and are only found in two other places in the world, Canada and South Africa respectively.

One of the best personal experiences I had in Paraguay definitely has to be building houses with TECHO, a non-profit organization located all over South America, which aims to tackle extreme poverty by building temporary houses for poor people. We spent four days during Semana Santa, or the weekend of Easter, building two houses in groups of six each. During those four days, we were completely immersed in the Paraguayan culture, as we were surrounded by people who only spoke Spanish. We started building houses at 8 am, and we spent the day laying down the foundation, and then hammering up the floor, the walls and the roof. We got back at 6 or 7 pm to the school where we washed up in the sinks, and then spent the night singing songs, playing board games and conversing with other people, all in Spanish. It was cultural immersion at its finest, and I'm incredibly thankful to Fundacion Paraguaya, WPI and TECHO for giving me this incredible opportunity to contribute to the community, in my own small way. The whole experience really opened my eyes to the disparity in living conditions in Paraguay. It was amazing to see people with a hole for a toilet, a tiny room to house a family of five or six, and a little light bulb as the primary source of light for the whole house living so close to the urban city, and it made me value several privileges I take for granted in life.

Some of the challenges I faced as a part of the first group in Paraguay was definitely the language barrier. I wish I'd known more Spanish prior to arriving in Paraguay. I feel like it would have made it easier to obtain information about the Poverty Stoplight Program from the 'asesoras'. Another minor challenge for me was navigating the carnivorous food scene and finding vegetarian food for myself, something that got much easier with time and an improved Spanish vocabulary.

I would definitely recommend anyone considering going to Paraguay for completing an IQP to have an advanced background in Spanish. You might think that you are proficient in Spanish, but native Spanish speakers speak extremely rapidly, and for this project, it is essential to be able to follow the Spanish being spoken by the 'asesoras' in the field, and the employees in the office when they are giving presentations about the program or other related initiatives. Knowing Spanish will determine how much information you can glean from the presentations to use toward your final presentation, and how useful you can be to the organization in their endeavors.

A suggestion for improving the personal experience in Paraguay would be to thoroughly research places to see around Paraguay, so that no one has any regrets of not having utilized their time abroad to see most of the country. There are some beautiful places in Paraguay, such as the White Lagoon and Ciudad del Este, that we did not get to explore because of time restrictions. With better planning, future students at this site may be able to visit these places. I also highly recommend future travelers here to try out as much of the indigenous food as they can. It's very different from any cuisine I've tried, and it's very easy to get addicted.

It would be beneficial for next year's team if the university figures out a way to let them live for a few days in the house of a client of Fundacion Paraguaya as well. This would provide valuable insight into the mindset of the client, and enable the students to be sensitive to the client's opinions and privacy while suggesting improvements to the monitoring system currently in place. Overall, however, I thought my experience was perfect, and I highly urge anyone who loves traveling, adventure and being exposed to new cultures to consider Paraguay as a potential IQP site. Believe me, you will not regret it!

## MATHEUS – THE AMAZING MYSTERY THAT IS PARAGUAY



My experience in Paraguay after 7 weeks for our IQP project was so much more than expected. Everything that I wanted to get out of the project academically, culturally, and personally was surpassed tenfold. Coming from a Brazilian background, I personally chose Paraguay because it was so close to home. I had heard stories and spoken with countless Brazilians who spoke of Paraguay as if it were not right on the border and they were not sharing the largest hydroelectric dam in South America. There was a sense of a negative preconception of this tiny land locked country, and immediately I had to question the Brazilian

mindset—how could I not?

One of the first things you notice in Asuncion is that Asuncion is not very different than other modern, up and coming capital cities of the world. It is riddled with car dealerships, shopping centers within decent distances, restaurants ranging from Brazilian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Turkish, Thai and several more. I can honestly admit to eating more culturally diverse plates here than I had ever thought in the U.S. The problem that becomes clear quickly enough, is that for example one of the main political buildings in the center of the city overlooks the Costanera (Beautiful beach that was man built on the edge of a river) and right next to it is an extremely poor area which is infested with the notorious. It is a sad truth that doesn't seem to bother those in power.

Something I did not expect to say at the end of our stay here, was that I wish I could stay longer. The laid back culture, the horrible buses, the chipa sellers at every corner, the thermoses for terere in nearly everyone's hand, the amazing intern house that the Fundacion provides—what an unforgettable past 7 weeks. We also went and volunteered for “Techo para mi pais”, or “Roof for my country”, which is roughly Habitat for Humanity and that was the definition of culture emersion in four days. Seeing families of 5 or 6 living in roughly a 3 by 3 meter home with no bathroom will forever change the way you look at your home with the flat screen and nice couch and separate bedrooms—its eye opening to say the least. Also the amount of different cultures, other than of course Paraguayan, we encountered was really surprising. We encountered lots of Germans in Encarnacion where the Jesuit ruins are, and here at the Intern house all together on our stay here, I would say we had roughly 7 or 8 people from different countries at one time.

Through a particular series of events I ended up coming to Paraguay with 3 others who I never met before this project and I met all of these amazing people who I know will be friends of mine till I die, and in this category are these former strangers in my group who I can now laugh with and share anything with. I don't know what else I could possibly ask for from this experience other than more time to soak and enjoy all of the culture, business experience, new friends, extremely late night laughs trying to learn Turkish while trying to teach Spanish (So much tougher when a hint of alcohol is involved). To those who are attracted to the uncomfortable and the unknown, I sincerely recommend this mystery of a country so that you can come explore for yourself and discover a different type of culture and an unordinary type of beauty.

## LAILAH – A GLIMPSE OF PARAGUAY



Originally, I came to Paraguay with an open mind, or at least what I had thought was one. I had no expectations for the country itself as far as culture, infrastructure, people, etc. However, I realized at the summation of my seven week trip, my error. I had steady held standards or expectations of the overall project such as work ethic, work style and presentation to that of American, or at least what I'm used to at WPI. The greatest lesson learned here was to realize that only once you stop making comparisons, will you fully enjoy and indulge in all that Paraguay and this particular IQP has to offer. Nonetheless, my seven weeks in Paraguay was an amazing experience. The highlights has to be the people I've met and the culture along with its history.

Paraguay is unique. It is one of the few countries that had a two-way colonization, where it infused the native culture with that of its colonizers, without one dominating the other. It's interesting to see the pride that is enriched by Paraguayans about Guarani culture. Paraguayan may be a small landlocked country but it is rich in culture and the pride, generosity and friendliness of Paraguayans makes it just as large as any other country. Paraguay has a big heart and it welcomed me in open arms. Despite the fact that I couldn't completely indulge in all the Paraguayan traditional food, many of which had cheese, a big no for a lactose intolerant person by myself, I was able to eat Paraguayan, speak Paraguayan and be Paraguayan. I was able to find home in a completely different country in another continent with barely any knowledge of the language. I entered Paraguay a level one Spanish speaker and leaving a level three Spanish speaker.

The immersion into Paraguayan was an easy transition because of the family of Fundacion Paraguaya. The employees at Fundacion Paraguaya were so welcoming and despite the language barrier, were able to make me feel at home. At first, the language barrier was quite intimidating especially with our first few conversations with Miguel Angel Riverola but after a few weeks and Spanish classes later, there was barely anything I didn't understand. Without the people at Fundacion Paraguaya from Sarah Hooper to Nancy Ramos, I don't think the project or our experience would have been as successful. The interns at the intern house who arrived prior to our arrival also contributed to the great experience. The conversations over dinner and ice cream or adventures to Encarnacion and Arregua were some of the highlights of the trip.

Paraguay is different and interesting and has left me with everlasting friendships, connecting me more to people from all over the world. What I will miss the most from Paraguay, are all the people I've met and friendships created as well as the delivery service of ice cream. The opportunity to be more than a tourist and actually become Paraguayan for seven weeks is one that I cherish and do not regret.

Overall the project of monitoring & evaluation systems gave insight to the field of social impact organizations and social entrepreneurship. Learning extended from beyond just the project to about Paraguaya, to about myself. The only concerns I have for the IQP is the coordination of extracurricular activities between WPI and Fundacion Paraguaya. Other than that Paraguay, the ISRP and Fundacion Paraguaya was a great experience and one I recommend to any person.



## Thank You

We'd like to give a special thanks to

Professor Traver

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Miguel Angel Riverola

Julie Wilson

Entire Staff of Fundacion Paraguaya

Interdisciplinary Global Studies Division of Worcester Polytechnic Institute

