Trip Report: Bolivia

June 1-July 31

Keri Agriesti, Graduate Research Assistant
Maria Elisa Christie, Gender Coordinator and PI for Gender CCRA
SANREM CRSP, OIRED/Virginia Tech

Purpose of Trip:
- Visit research sites and meet with research team on behalf of the Management Entity
- Pilot and revise research instruments for Gender CCRA: focus group discussion and activities; interviews; interpretation of satellite imagery; participatory mapping; GPS points of plots
- Set SANREM graduate student up in field; plan remainder of stay
- Complete student research
- Train SANREM GRA and host country team in use of qualitative research instruments to be used in focus groups and in household visits
- Discuss and come to agreement with host country team regarding methods and research plans
- Plan soil sampling
- Deliver hydrometers for soil research

Sites Visited:
- Cochabamba – PROINPA offices
- Sank’ayani Alto, Tiraque (upper) watershed
- Los Andes – lands above Sank’ayani (13,500 feet)

Executive summary:
From June to July, the Gender CCRA Gendered Perspectives for Conservation Agriculture carried out fieldwork on mapping local soil knowledge, access to resources, and gendered space. The graduate research assistant traveled to Bolivia in early June and met with PROINPA to set up plans for student fieldwork and a research visit with the gender equity coordinator. The first four weeks of June included Spanish language classes and initial introductions with the Sank’ayani Alto community in Tiraque. The PI traveled to Bolivia in late June. Extensive discussions were held with the PROINPA team to come to final agreements on program and methodology. Fieldwork began with the PROINPA team and included a focus group on mapping gendered soils knowledge on a satellite image; a visit four households, and a mapping exercise on farmers’ fields for later soil sampling by PROINPA.
After the PIs return to Virginia, field work continued for four more weeks. Student field work included ten household visits (20 people), another focus group, field visits for GPS mapping, and participant observation. Initial data analysis shows men’s and women’s different knowledge in correlation with their different use of and access to various landscape features. Women tended to describe and draw soils in relation to pasture, planting, and other activities, while men tended to focus on drawing soils based in plots and irrigation. Preliminary findings also show that men’s descriptions of soils tend to focus more on what goes into it – crops, water, wind, and how soil quality is influenced by location – whereas women’s descriptions tend to focus more on what comes out of soil – food, fodder for animals, and production rates, and how production affects soil health.

**Description of Activities/Observations:**
From June to July, the Gender CCRA Gendered Perspectives for Conservation Agriculture undertook fieldwork on mapping local soil knowledge, access to resources, and gendered space. The Graduate Research Assistant traveled to Bolivia in early June and met with PROINPA to set up plans for student fieldwork and a research visit with the Gender Equity Coordinator. The first two weeks of June were spent taking language classes and visiting PROINPA offices to meet the Tiraque team. During the second week of June (5-11), introductions were made at the community monthly meeting in Sank’ayani Alto, Tiraque with José Olivar of PROINPA. The goal of this meeting was to present the Gender CCRA’s research goals to study men and women’s soil knowledge, places where they do activities, and soil sampling of fields. Following the meeting, dates for fieldwork in the community were made.

The last two weeks of June included language classes, a meeting with Jeff Alwang, PI of LTRA-7, and a field visit to Sank’ayani Alto with the PROINPA team and Spanish-Quechua translator. We discussed and confirmed plans for field work, agreeing to have a focus group on community soils the week of June 26-July 2, when Dr. Christie would come to visit. The GRA also visited Sank’ayani Alto with PROINPA in order to participate in the research team’s activities. This included helping a Bolivian student collect quinoa from farmers’ fields, visiting the irrigation canals, and meeting the farmers. We also visited farmers’ houses to invite them to attend a focus group the next week.

Late June through early July marked the first two weeks of fieldwork with the PI of the Gender CCRA. Virginia Tech student, Keri Agriesti, and her interpreter/assistant Mikaela Cáceres Orozco began work with the community during this intensive pilot testing stage. Extensive discussions were held with the PROINPA team to come to final agreements on program and methodology, including a focus group, soil sampling, and household/field visits. The focus group consisted of three activities: (1) description of soil samples; (2) listing soils of the community; (3) mapping soils on a satellite image of the community. We decided that for activity 2, we would use a simplified chart on large chart paper. When the team traveled to the community for the focus group, we had planned to conduct the activity with just women. However, when we arrived we saw that a group of men were also present.

The focus group was led by José Olivar, who introduced the research team, and also explained each activity. After this opening, we separated men and women into groups, with the women going outside and the men staying inside. After the activities were finished, the men and women
returned to a whole group where the team thanked the farmers and provided a community meal. From the focus group, we observed that the women did not participate as much as the men, in terms of talking and being involved in the exercises. We realized that this might have been because the women had to stand outside (compared to men who sat inside), and also because the translator did not have a relationship of trust built over time as José had, and did not possess facilitator skills. The women’s group was also dominated by a woman leader; other women were hesitant to speak after her and said she had already presented their views. It was clear that status and hierarchy were important factors that, along with gender, needed to be taken into account and managed in some way. Speaking with the leader earlier about her role and encouraging her to facilitate space for other women to contribute rather than lead could have helped and is recommended for future focus groups. Also, for future work, we should better prepare the translator beforehand. We noticed that both men and women listed the same and some different soils. With the PROINPA team, we observed that we were limiting people’s comments about the soil because our questions in the chart focused on agriculture by asking what is produced in each type of soil. For this reason, people did not comment on animals or pasture lands, and thus did not list all of the soils in the community as per our original intent.

The rest of the CCRA PI’s visit included four household visits, a meeting with the PROINPA Director, and a wrap-up meeting with the PROINPA team. During the household visits we interviewed each person separately. We began the exercise with a photo interpretation, followed by a participatory mapping exercise, and questions about climate change in the community. For the mapping exercise, we asked farmers to draw their resources (house, plots, pasture, etc.), list the soil in each place and what it produces, and then to mark their ‘best’ or ‘worst’ soil. After the household visit, the farmer took us to the places he/she marked ‘best’ or ‘worst’ soil, where it was mapped by a GPS. At the end of the week the team met with the director and gender coordinator of PROINPA. We discussed our activities of the week and plans for following student field work. From our discussion, we decided to add more questions about climate change in the household visits.

Student fieldwork of the methodologies listed above was continued throughout July. This included ten household visits (20 people), another focus group on activities, field visits for GPS mapping, and participant observation.

**Additional Comments:**
The host country team is gender balanced and shows gender-sensitivity (including the director), as well as having many years of experience facilitating women’s participation in their research and other activities in the Tiraque watershed. Three of the research team members (along with other PROINPA staff) on this trip participated in the gender workshop held in La Paz three years ago under the previous phase of SANREM worked with us during this visit; one, Magaly Salazar, an agronomist who attended the workshop and has 13 years of experience on participatory research with farmers, has been responsible for gender at PROINPA since the workshop. Her comments and those of Rubén in particular helped reshape the research instruments for more efficient and targeted data gathering. Several PROINPA folks also attended and remembered the gender presentation the PI gave during a visit for the SANREM annual meeting in the past phase. We left copies of an article on gender indicators (Qualitative and
Quantitative Indicators for the Monitoring and Evaluation of the ILO Gender Mainstreaming Strategy) for Karina and Rolando, who requested one.

**Training Activities Conducted:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program type (workshop, seminar, field day, short course, etc.)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Training Provider (US university, host country institution, etc.)</th>
<th>Training Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Workshop</td>
<td>June 27</td>
<td>PROINPA staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group workshop on soils</td>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>Members of community of Sank’ayani Alto</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Virginia Tech and PROINPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>Members of community of Sank’ayani Alto</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Virginia Tech and PROINPA</td>
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**Suggestions and Recommendations:**

- Field assistants or translators provided by the host team should have experience with participatory research.

- It is important to have separate men and women’ groups for focus groups. However, men and women should be present their information to each other at the end.
- In addition to gender, other factors such as status need to be monitored and addressed so that hierarchies within each group do not stifle participation by all.

- Participants in focus groups should have a different age range, and be sure to especially include the elderly given the focus on knowledge.

- Questionnaires/surveys should be written in Quechua and Spanish before fieldwork starts.

The following host country team members participated and contributed to the research and training activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Role and Contributions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubén Botello</td>
<td>7646 5865 or PROINPA ext.</td>
<td>Lead PI for Bolivia; attended gender workshop in La Paz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana Karina Saavedra</td>
<td>PROINPA ext. 147</td>
<td>Funded by SANREM; attended gender workshop in La Paz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magaly Salazar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attended gender workshop in La Paz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José Olivero Camacho</td>
<td>7171 7344</td>
<td>Technician in Tiraque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadezda Amaya</td>
<td>7794 6452</td>
<td>SANREM student, Ag Econ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thesis on forage, thus background in pasturing; funded by SANREM; made list of animals and plants in Quechua and Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirko Delfín</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Delfinmirko@hotmail.com">Delfinmirko@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>GIS expert; worked with Conrad Heathwole and with Motovalli on last phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikaela Cáceres Orozco</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mikaela.caceres@gmail.com">mikaela.caceres@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Translator and field assistant</td>
</tr>
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