

# PROMOTING URBAN CENTRALITIES THROUGH HOUSING COOPERATIVES IN BOLIVIA:

THE PROPOSAL OF THE PRO-HABITAT FOUNDATION

TACKLING THE GLOBAL HOUSING CHALLENGES

Zurich, Switzerland

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**MISEREOR**  
IHR HILFSWERK



# **1. Introduction**

2. Housing cooperatives in Bolivia

3. The Pro-Habitat Foundation

*3.1. Mutual Aid Housing Cooperative proposal*

4. Achievements & challenges

# BOLIVIA



Total population: 10'027'254 inhabitants (2012)

Urban population: 67%

Urban population growth: 2.4% (annual)

# The housing shortage

## Basic data

Total housing units (2012):	ca. 2'700'000
Quantitative shortage:	ca. 700'000 houses
Qualitative shortage:	ca. 1'200'000 houses
Self-help construction:	70%

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2 Mutual Aid Housing Cooperative built in Bolivia between 2002-2014:

**Mutual Aid Housing Cooperative Señor de Piñami (COVISEP)**

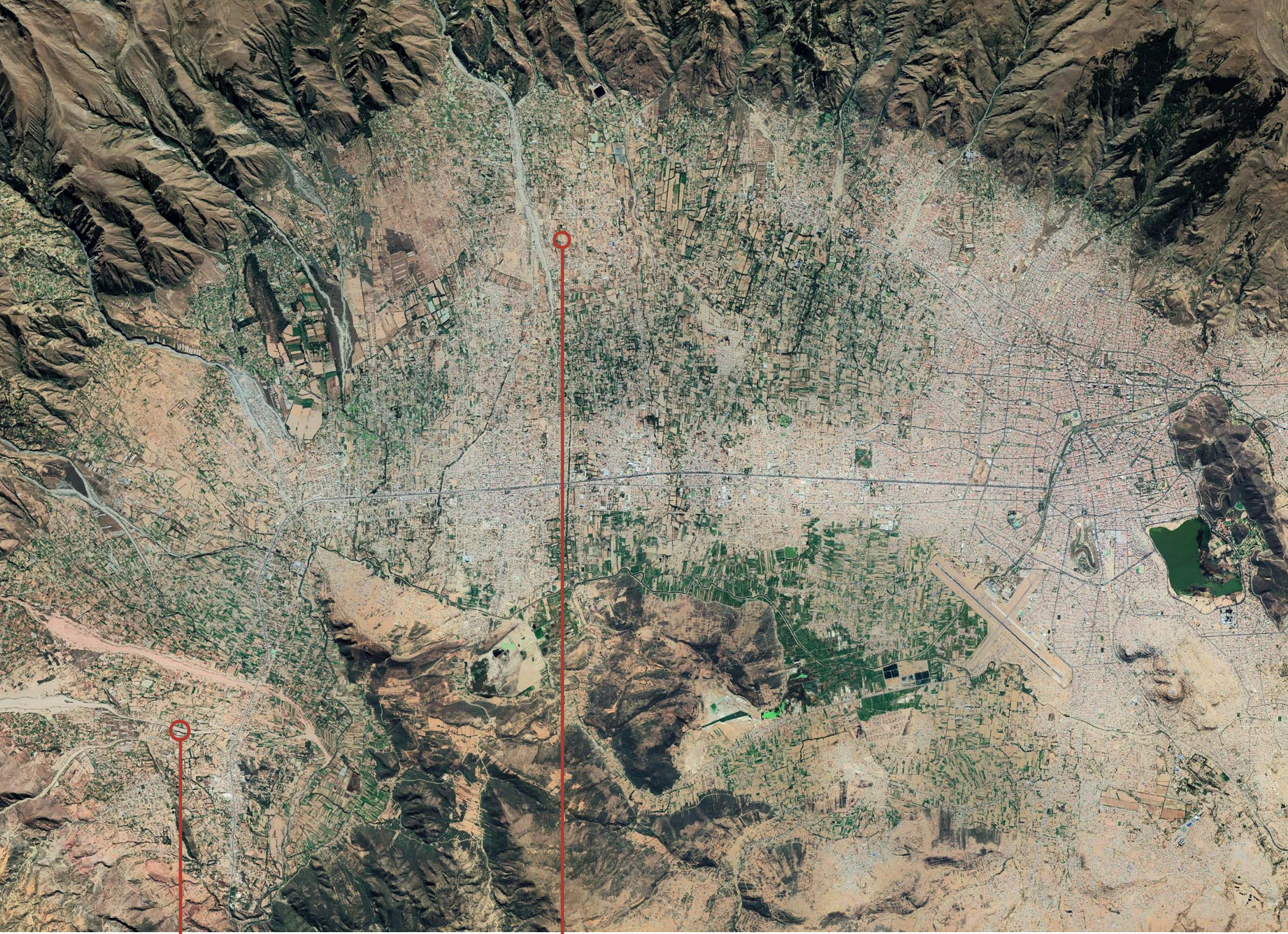
El Paso, Quillacollo, Metropolitan Region of Cochabamba

30 houses

**Mutual aid Housing Cooperative Virgen Del Rosario (COVIVIR)**

Sipe Sipe, Metropolitan Region of Cochabamba

12 houses



COVIVIR

COVISEP

COVISEP





COVIVIR



# Innovations / achievements

## **Legal perspective**

Legal entity recognised in the Cooperatives National Law Nr. 356

### Collective land ownership

Facilitate access to affordable land

Prevent speculation

Recognised in the Political Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia 2009 (Art. 56 and 393)

## **Social perspective**

### Mutual aid and self-organisation

Alternative social model based on cooperation and solidarity

Culturally appropriated (Andean concept of "ainy")

## **Technical perspective**

Integral technical and legal advice: costs reduction, assisted design and self-construction

# Limits of the model

## **Political perspective**

Political will

Frequent changes in the ministries

## **Legal perspective**

Legal entities cannot be funded by the Governmental Housing Agency

## **Urban perspective**

Remote locations

No relation with the neighbourhood / context

## **Architectural perspective**

Mono-functional low-rise single-family houses

Rigid housing typologies

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## **The Pro-Habitat Foundation**

is a Bolivian NGO established in 1993 to promote community participation and management for the development of human settlements in Bolivia.

Since its foundation, it functions as a project implementation entity, with approximately 35,000 improved houses, focusing on the social production of habitat and housing processes.

During recent years, it also has also managed projects relating to the security of tenancy (public, collective and private), sustainable urban development, compact city, collective housing, urban centralities, etc.



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## **Objective**

To implement a micro urban centrality through a Mutual Aid Cooperative Housing and collective land ownership, to facilitate the access to an affordable and adequate habitat and housing for urban poor, that is socially, culturally and economically appropriated.

# PROJECT LOCALIZATION



CBO Tacopoca Alta  
Lava Lava District



## Problems

Urban sprawl

Land regulation problems

Lack of public and green spaces, equipments and services

## Opportunities

Strong CBO

Good localisation

Vacant plots

Affordable land prices



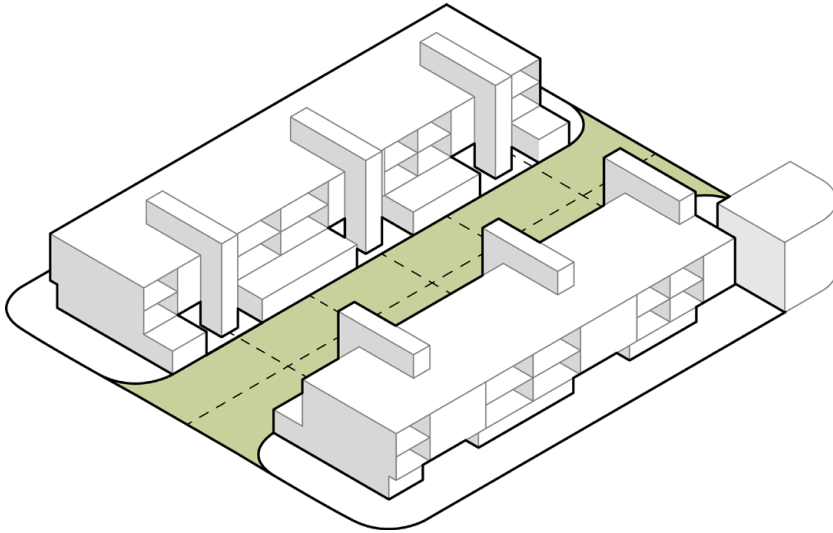
Public spaces (land registry / urban regulation)

Green areas  
0.2% (min. 19%)

Infrastructure  
0.4% (min. 2%)

# STRATEGY

## COLLECTIVE LAND OWNERSHIP AND QUALITY PUBLIC AND GREEN SPACES



≥19% surface for green areas (urban framework)

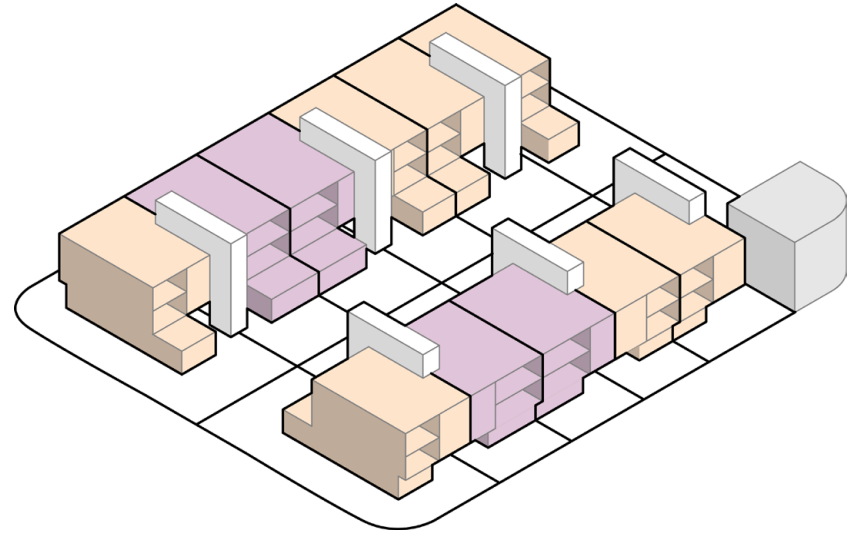


Collective land ownership regulation, security of tenance



Public and pedestrian areas

## EQUILIBRATED URBAN DENSIFICATION



Medium rise high density blocks (3-4 storey), different variation

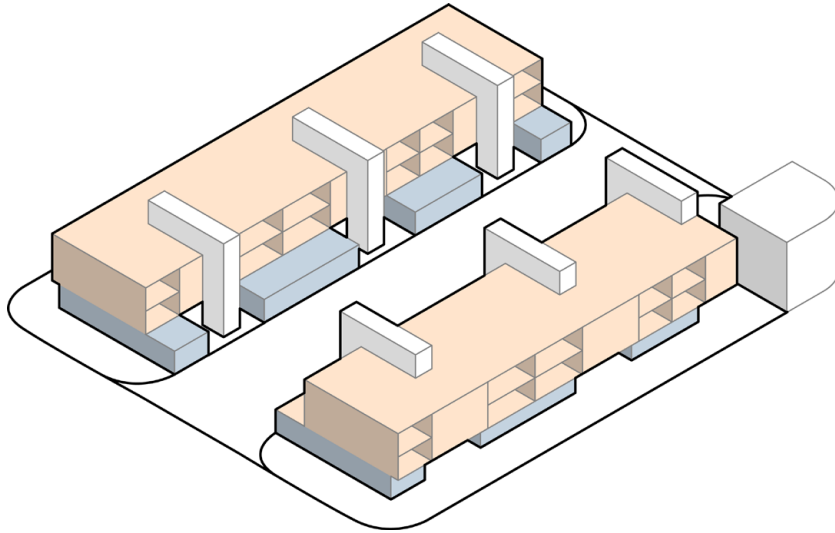
Rational use of land, affordable prices



Ev. existing building

# STRATEGY

## MIXED USES AND FUNCTIONS



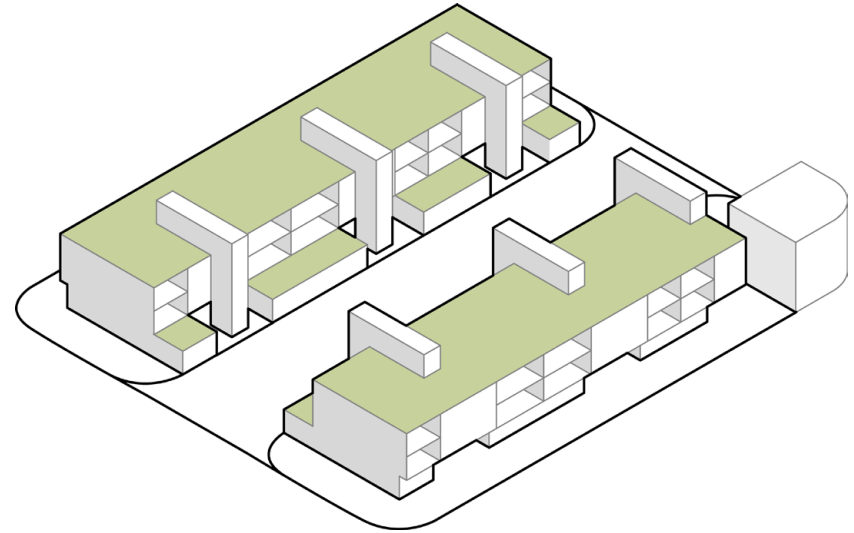
Progressive apartments, different variation



Multi-functional and flexible spaces:  
Services, shops, workshops, accessible apart-  
ments for elderly and disabled persons, etc.

Lively neighbourhood, local economic devel-  
opment

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REDUCTION



Thermal comfort, water recycling and reuse,  
local and ecological materials



Urban gardens

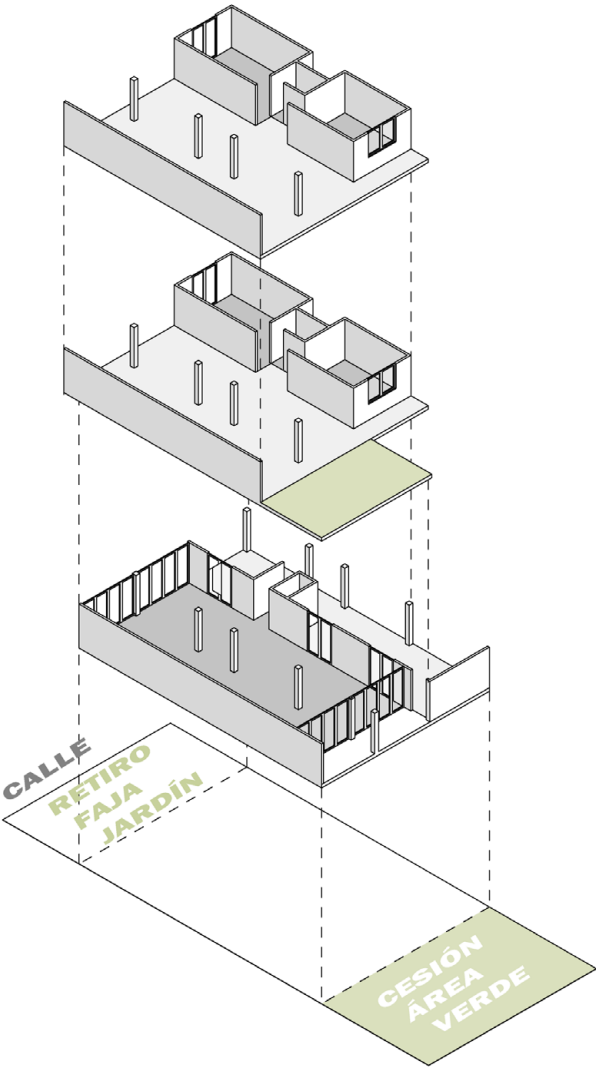


Collective spaces

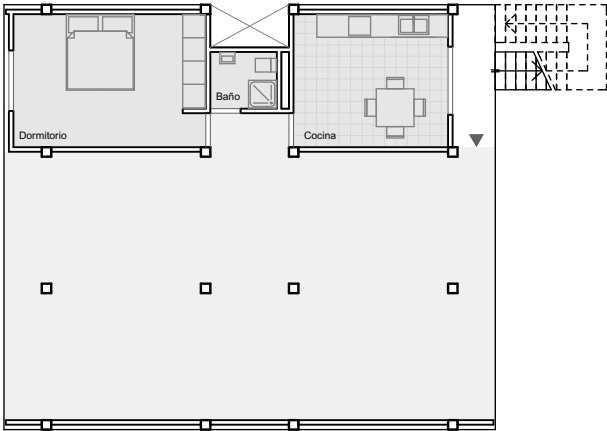
# STRATEGY

## FLEXIBLE BLOCKS AND PROGRESSIVE HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

3-4 florey block composition

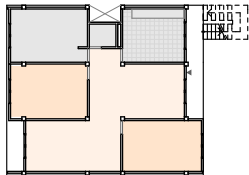
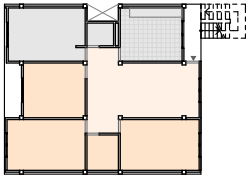
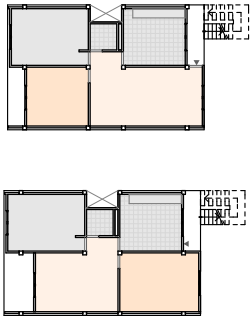


Progressive apartments typologies



Floors

Flexibility





Axonometry



View of the public space

Elevation with improved housing units



# Opportunities

## **Synthesis of different experiences and lessons learnt**

- Pro-Habitat Foundation, Maria Auxiliadora Community, Mutual Aid Housing Cooperatives in Bolivia, etc.

## **Legal framework**

- Right to an adequate habitat and housing and collective land ownership recognized in the Constitution, Cooperative National Law

## **Generate social inclusion and raise awareness through assisted social production of habitat and housing processes**

## **Public – private partnership proposal**

- Government subsidies in construction materials and Social Housing Credit Program (banks); Private companies: support through the Social Business Responsibility Program; Participants counterpart (self-construction, local construction materials)

## **National agenda**

- National Politic of Cities Integral Development (Vice-ministry of Housing and Urbanism)



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# Achievements

## 2017

- Alliance with the Municipality of Sacaba
- Selection of a peripheral neighbourhood
- Collective housing proposal: 1<sup>st</sup> prize at the *XIII Bolivian Architecture Biennale 2017*

## 2018

- Alliances: - CBO Tacopoca Alta
  - Vice-ministry of Urbanism and Housing
  - Faculty of Architecture and Habitat Sciences, University Mayor San Simon of Cochabamba
- Project profile
- Participative mapping in the CBO

## 2019

- Alliance with ONU Habitat in Bolivia
- September: start project 1st phase (urban sanitation and education)
- September: reunion with We Effect's and Misereor's country representatives to present the proposal and envisage a possible alliance

# Challenges

2020: political situation, new presidential and municipal elections

## **Mutual Aid Housing Cooperative proposal**

- Strengthen existing alliances and generate news one: CBOs, local and national governments, NGOs, academia, international cooperation agency, etc.
- Development of a housing cooperative proposal adapted to the Bolivian socio-economic, cultural and legal context
- Government Agency for Housing: new framework that allows to fund legal entities (housing cooperatives) with subsidies and Social Housing Credit Program
- Multidisciplinary approach involving different stakeholders



THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!