



**Word Made Flesh Bolivia**  
Strategic Plan  
2017-2020

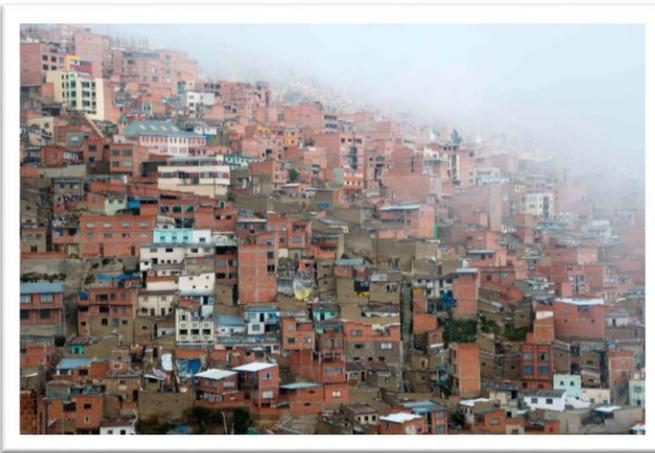


## Introduction

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”<sup>1</sup> Word Made Flesh Bolivia is a community of passionate world-changers, who consistently choose hope against the odds, seeking abundant life for prostituted women and their families. Our service is an expression of our faith, a declaration of our belief in an all-powerful God and a humble attempt to follow Christ's example of service among the poor. It is our desire that the following proposal would bring light to dark places and transformation to all who participate.

## Context

Bolivia is a country of contrasts, “rough around the edges, superlative in natural beauty, rugged, vexing, complex...”<sup>2</sup>



Homes on the hillside of La Paz, Bolivia

Though rich in cultural diversity and natural resources, Bolivia continues to struggle from centuries of exploitation and tumultuous governance, maintaining one of the highest poverty rates in Latin America. With over 10 million inhabitants, an estimated 60% of the population continues to struggle to meet their basic needs.

Over the last decade, Latin America's first indigenous president, Evo Morales, has improved political and economic stability throughout Bolivia with socialist policies. And though successful in amplifying the indigenous voice, Evo has failed to fully meet expectations or reconcile ancient racial divides.

Once a slum-overgrowth of the capital city La Paz, El Alto is now Bolivia's youngest and fastest growing urban center, with over 1 million residents.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Mead

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/introduction#ixzz4L63YsTBY>

<sup>3</sup> El Alto, La Paz. *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 21 Feb. 2013.

Seated at 13,300 ft. above sea level along the high-plains of the Andes mountains, El Alto is intense: oxygen-depleted, windswept, with frigid temperatures, blaring sunshine and scant vegetation.<sup>4</sup>

Proudly termed by some the “Aymara capital of the world,”<sup>5</sup> El Alto is the largest Latin American city with a majority indigenous population.<sup>6</sup> Thousands have flocked here in search of a better life, making El Alto a classic example of globalization and rapid urbanization - a city of rural migrants, a city of hope.

The local government has understandably failed to provide an adequate infrastructure, resulting in insufficient housing and lack of basic social services. Unemployment and underemployment have contributed to the tremendous increase in the informal economy. Long-term stable employment is virtually unknown.

These vastly different cultural and socio-economic contexts create obvious tensions, which simmer just below the surface and often erupt. El Alto is well known for being the country’s center of political and social instability. It is highly feared across Bolivia; and at times, with reason. By her wealthier neighbors, El Alto is largely considered the “worst of the worst” - the center of crime, poverty, rebellion and delinquency.



Wiphala, symbol of the Aymara people

In the shadows of the Bolivian reality is a culture that systemically undervalues women, making minors, the indigenous and poverty-stricken particularly vulnerable. Bolivia ranks highest in partner violence in all of Latin America.<sup>7</sup> Nine out of 10 women are expected to be victims of some type of violence in their lifetimes;<sup>8</sup> 70% victims of sexual violence.<sup>9</sup> Every three days, another woman falls victim to femicide.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Gill, Lesley. *Teetering on the Rim: Global Restructuring, Daily Life, and the Armed Retreat of the Bolivian State*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p 39.

<sup>6</sup> El Alto, La Paz. *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*.

<sup>7</sup> *Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A comparative analysis of population-based data from 12 countries*, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), March 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Vice-Ministry of Equal Opportunities (VIO), Bolivia, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Informe “*Violencia Sexual* Contra las Mujeres,” Defensor del Pueblo, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> *Violencia Contra La Mujer y Femicidio en Bolivia*, Reporte Estadístico, 2012-2013, Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Mujer (CIDEM).



While there's some progress in law establishment and public awareness, Bolivia lacks the capacity or judicial infrastructure to ensure protection.<sup>11</sup> Weak border control makes the land-locked country even more susceptible. "Sexual predators act with impunity: someone who sexually assaults a child in Bolivia is more likely to die slipping in the shower or bathtub than to be sentenced to jail for their crime."<sup>12</sup> Without firm political and social structures in place, vulnerable women lack even basic resources for their protection, support or empowerment.

Traffickers, skilled in taking advantage of such situations, use social and online networks and informal temporary employment agencies to identify and recruit potential victims, making Bolivia "a source country for men, women, and children exploited in sex trafficking and forced labor within the country and abroad."<sup>13</sup> Sex trafficking occurs as the result of force, fraud or coercion. And though widely assumed that women in prostitution choose "easy money," an estimated 84% are likely victims of sex trafficking.<sup>14</sup> Even more likely, she fell prey in escaping the factors outlined above.<sup>15</sup>

While positive initiatives exist against the commercial sexual exploitation of minors, Bolivia, at the same time, supports the freedom and dignity of adult sex workers through legalized prostitution for those 18 years and over. Though we may rally a woman's liberation, this contradiction fails to make the link between abuse, trafficking and prostitution, essentially leaving a victimized young woman trapped, while dignifying her exploitation.

The combined cities of El Alto and La Paz report approximately 13,500 legally registered sex workers.<sup>16</sup> WMFB though, has maintained a consistent presence on Carrasco Street, which hosts roughly 600 beds in a dozen brothels. In the red-light district, women show the war-torn signs of injustice upon injustice: alcohol abuse, domestic violence, single-parenthood, heavy debt, to name a few. WMFB meets her there, hoping to break through the lies and awaken dormant dreams. And then, when she is ready, offers her the tools and support needed to reach them. The following pages outline that plan.

---

<sup>11</sup> From 2000 to 2007 the criminal justice system convicted fewer than three perpetrators of child sexual assault per year, from the International Justice Mission Bolivia, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Haugen, Gary and Victor Boutros. *The Locust Effect*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> "2016 Trafficking in Persons Report," U.S. Department of State, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Melissa Farley, Kenneth Franzblau, and M. Alexis Kennedy, *Online prostitution & Trafficking*, Albany Law Journal, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Over 90% of women in prostitution are victims of child sexual abuse, Melissa Farley

<sup>16</sup> Lily Cortez, Organización de Trabajadoras Nocturnas, 2013.



## History of Word Made Flesh Bolivia

The story of Word Made Flesh Bolivia is one of God's faithfulness and grace, one where loved ones have come and gone and left their mark, one of perseverance in the face of disappointment, political turmoil, sickness, severe weather and tough living. But it is also one where Hope triumphs and each small step towards transformation matters.

*La Palabra Hecha Vida* (WMFB) first began as a desire to continue the work of Word Made Flesh in South America. As one of the most impoverished countries in the region, as well as its proximity to the already established WMF Peru, the community decided to expand ministry to Bolivia.

On August 2, 2001, Andy and Andrea Baker innocently and excitedly arrived to El Alto as the first missionaries of WMFB. After attending language school, they established a home and began researching the needs of the city. To their own surprise, they found an unmet need among women in prostitution, and opportunities for ministry began to open. Early in 2002, they began visiting the brothels on Carrasco Street in Bolivia's largest red-light district and slowly began building relationships with the women there.

Nearly every woman they met claimed to be working the streets to feed their children, so that May the Bakers hosted a Mother's Day Celebration and formally introduced the ministry of Word Made Flesh Bolivia to nearly 100 prostituted women and their children.

With relationships established, there came a growing need for a more adequate space to further those friendships. On October 1, 2003, *La Casa de Esperanza*, The House of Hope - a name christened by the women themselves - opened its doors as a place of hospitality and care for prostituted women and their children. Every Wednesday and Friday afternoon, a small group of volunteers would share a meal together with all who came to visit.

Together with their local community, Andy & Andrea determined four ministry foci and eventually began literacy classes, a children’s program, medical consults and a corresponding therapeutic program, “Paso a Paso” (Step by Step). A quiet and slightly grumpy little lady, now known as Eliana, participated and changed the community forever.

Andy Baker met Eliana in the brothels, searching for a way off the streets. At the ministry center, she was offered a new job in housekeeping. And with the support of a loving community, she found the safe space she needed to meet her Savior. Her baptism is one of the most significant moments in the history of WMFB. The entire community came to support her, staff and volunteers, along with friends from the street, long-standing church members and new believers. They all crammed in a tiny, candlelit room, singing praises and watching 55 years of darkness wash away in a plastic inflatable swimming pool.

In 2006, *La Palabra Hecha Vida* (WMFB) became a locally registered Foundation, along with a functioning Board of Directors. And then in 2015, LPHV became the first tax-exempt non-government organization in the Department of La Paz.

After a number of scattered attempts to support women in their desire to leave the streets, some more successful than others, the community learned – that money would not solve the problem, nor a swift faith conversion. They learned that a woman needs a supportive community around her, to learn new life skills and rhythms, to address the deep wounds that led her to her reality and space to allow those hurts to heal. They found that a woman who has been victimized needs



Cecilia ready for new beginnings

economic security within a safe sanctuary to hear and respond to that still soft Voice.

So the community began to draft a dream, and in 2010, SutiSana, a social enterprise for women in prostitution, received its first participants. A combination of Aymara & Spanish, the prominent local languages, SutiSana means, “healed name.” It is based on Isaiah 62 and inspired by their co-worker and friend, Eliana. Upon her conversion, she chose a new name meaning, “My God has answered me.” Eliana embodies the hope desired for many others, holistic transformation, healed names and identities. SutiSana now provides dignified employment, a fair salary and full benefits to 9 women.

Over the years the community also noted repeated cycles of poverty and abuse in the lives of the women’s children. So in 2015, WMFB expanded their attention to children affected by prostitution through a weekly after-school program. With nutritious meals, tutoring, discipleship and opportunities for personal and leadership growth, children are encouraged and empowered to seek the Lord’s best for their lives.

In recounting the multitude of stories and remembering all who have passed through, there’s still much to be told. However, that which the Lord began continues today. Hundreds of women and children are finding the freedom and wholeness that Christ offers. To God be the glory.



Michel and her son



## Identity

### Vision

#### **Word Made Flesh**

Word Made Flesh is called and committed to serve Jesus among the most vulnerable of the worlds poor. This calling is realized as a prophetic ministry for, and an incarnational, holistic mission among the poor. We focus our energy to make Jesus known among the poor while reconciling the church with the poor.

#### **Word Made Flesh Bolivia**

*Abundant life for those affected by prostitution.*

### Mission

In community, we practice and proclaim the Kingdom of God among persons affected by prostitution, offering friendship and opportunities for transformation.

### Philosophy

Word Made Flesh is committed to the following philosophical commitments,



Silvia, proud SutiSana artisan



expressed in seven missional starting points<sup>17</sup>:

**Jesus and the Kingdom of God** Hebrews 12:28, 13:8

We are an ecumenical community of Christians united in obedience to Jesus for service among the poor. Our service flows from intimacy with Jesus and is guided by the values of the Kingdom of God.

**The Most Vulnerable of the World's Poor** Matthew 25:40, James 2:5

We respond to the needs of the world by building community among those who lack sustainable access to resources and availability to opportunity.

**Community** Genesis 1:27, Mark 6:7, John 13:35, 1 Corinthians 12, Acts 4:32, Philippians 2:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Community, a tangible sign of the Kingdom of God, is our starting point for theological, ecclesiological and missiological activity. Solidarity with the most vulnerable of the world's poor fulfills our community.

**Holistic, Incarnational Mission** John 1:14, 20:21, II Corinthians 5:18-20, Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 25:35-36, James 2:15, I John 3:16-18

We do not minister to the poor; we are in mission among the poor, identifying with them rather than integrating the poor into our reality. Identification is central in the ministry of reconciliation. Our purpose is for the redemption of the whole person toward the redemption of society. We participate in holistic transformation, desiring to facilitate regeneration and restoration.

**Simplicity in Life and Ministry** Matthew 10:7-10, I John 3:16-18

We posture ourselves in simplicity with open hands, dependent on God.

**Partnership in Mission** Revelation 5:9-10, Galatians 3:28

In our praxis of mutual submission, mission is dependent on partnership with local Christians and churches. Mission unifies us.

**The Urban Context** Isaiah 60, Matthew 9:35-36, 21:10, Luke 13:34-35, Revelation 20-22

Our eschatological hope for the renewed city calls us to give ourselves to the redemption of urban settings.

---

<sup>17</sup> Word Made Flesh believes in and adheres to the declarations of faith as drawn up by the Lausanne Conference for local and global evangelization <http://www.lausanne.org>.

## Lifestyle Celebrations

**Intimacy** We celebrate intimacy with Jesus to be our highest calling and our created purpose.

**Obedience** We celebrate obedience as our loving response to the grace of Jesus.

**Humility** We celebrate humility before God and humanity.

**Service** We celebrate service as an expression of our fellowship.

**Community** We celebrate community as a means for discipleship, service and growth.

**Simplicity** We celebrate simplicity as a privilege in identification with Jesus and the poor.

**Submission** We celebrate submission to Jesus, each other and the poor.

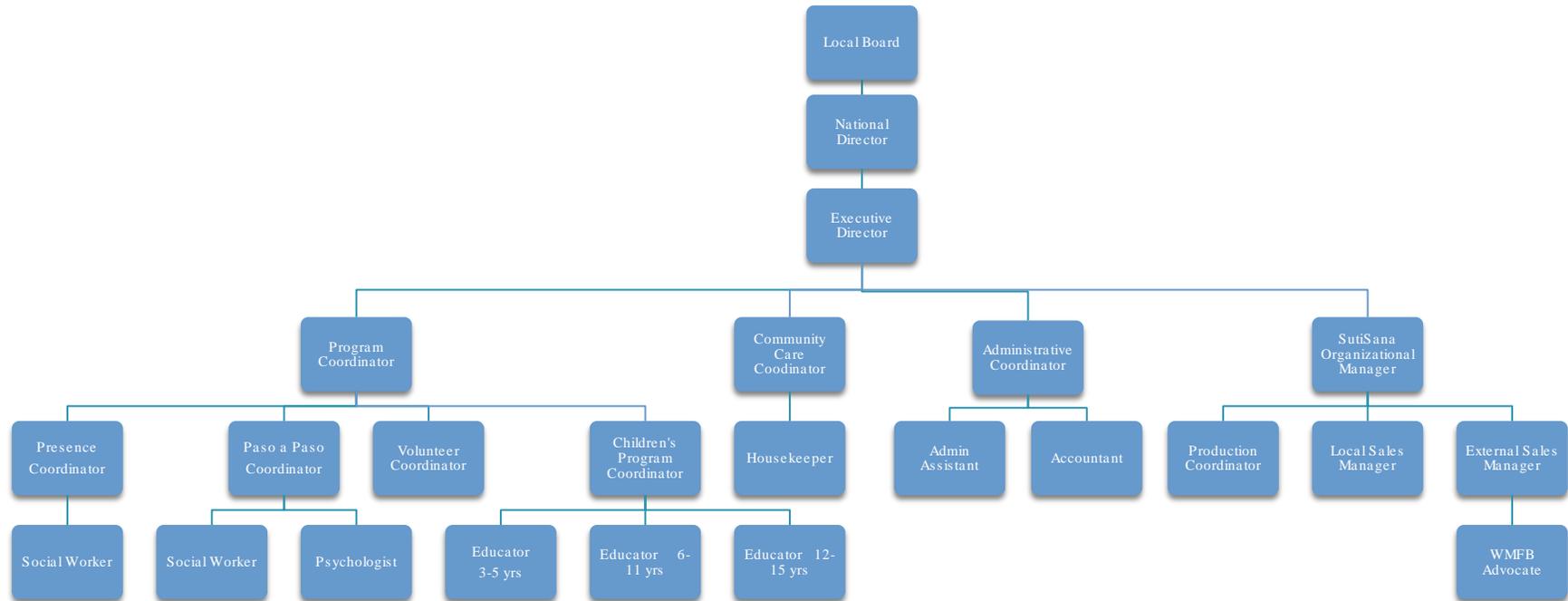
**Brokenness** We celebrate brokenness as our responsibility in ministry among the broken.

**Suffering** We celebrate suffering as a willing sacrifice in serving Jesus.



Andrea and Mari at the WMFB ministry center

### Current Organizational Chart





## Current Strategy & Programming

WMFB programming is designed to accompany a woman through the patient process of transformation, following the stages of Victim -- Survivor -- Thriver:<sup>18</sup>

- **Presence** meets the victim in her place of need
- The social enterprise, **SutiSana** offers stability and support for personal and professional growth
- **Paso a Paso** (Step by Step) provides the tools and opportunities needed for holistic growth
- **Salt & Light** was implemented in recent years to break the cycles of poverty and abuse we often see repeated in the children

Internally, programming is supported by the following departments:

- **Community Care** provides holistic care for all staff as they pour out their lives for others
- **Administration** sustains all financial, legal and organizational aspects of the Foundation
- **Advocacy** serves as a voice for the voiceless, connecting the Church to God's heart for the poor, through education and opportunities for financial partnership and service

---

<sup>18</sup> As detailed in the following graphic.

### **Vanessa**

*On a chilly June evening, a small team made their regular red-light district visit, and met Vanessa.\* At 28 years old, she had resorted to prostitution a few months prior to make ends meet while providing for her two sons, ages 2 and 6.*

*The very next day, Vanessa visited the WMFB drop-in center. Over tea, she shared how she had been orphaned as a little girl and then unable to finish high school. Vanessa began coming regularly to programmed activities and even came early to have lunch with the staff, just for the company. During this time, the team felt a supernatural peace about considering Vanessa for a position with SutiSana, although they had known her for such a brief time.*

*Vanessa suddenly fell ill however and needed surgery within the week. She had no insurance and WMFB's budget for medical support was depleted. The team prayed fiercely for the Lord's provision however, and within 48 hours, donations covered her entire surgery and post-op care. Vanessa remembers sensing the Lord's presence in the operating room.*

*Back on her feet, Vanessa began sewing and personal development training with WMFB in August and brought her sons daily to the children's program. In the training, she exceeded expectations and became a support to the other women.*

*This October, she joined SutiSana full-time and courageously separated from her abusive partner. Reflecting on these few months, she holds back tears and says, "It feels like a dream." She has asked to be baptized this Fall.*

*\*Name changed for her privacy and protection.*

Seeks HEALING: addresses the issues that brought a woman to prostitution and held her there. Essential aspects include therapy, discipleship, financial planning and tutoring for her children.

*Step by Step*

Thriver

# ABUNDANT LIFE

*Advocacy*

*Community  
Care*

*Administration*

Victim

Survivor

*Presence*

Reaches prostituted women and walks with them. Presence AWAKENS them to the possibility of a new reality and hosts strategic activities to break generational cycles.

*SutiSana*

Provides dignified employment for survivors, allowing them to reach their full potential. SutiSana EQUIPS them with professional and life skills.



## WMFB SWOT Analysis

The following ministry analysis was completed with current staff, program participants, potential program participants and even brothel administrators. Below is a summary highlighting our insights:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 14 years experience directly accompanying prostituted women and their families</li> <li>• A Christ-centered community, passionately committed to seeking abundant life for those affected by prostitution</li> <li>• Holistic and integrated programming to both women and children affected by prostitution</li> <li>• Just and dignified employment that facilitates spiritual growth for prostituted women</li> <li>• Warm and welcoming facility for women and children affected by prostitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak SutiSana sales &amp; marketing plan in place for continued growth and economic sustainability</li> <li>• Underdeveloped fundraising strategy for WMFB for continued growth and economic sustainability</li> <li>• Weak network of local partnerships for the long-term benefit and support of program participants</li> <li>• Lacking updated strategies for reaching new women</li> <li>• Slow, inadequate response to high-risk abuse situations in children &amp; women</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing interest, locally and internationally, in the eradication of sex trafficking</li> <li>• Sole national organization that exists specifically to serve prostituted women in Bolivia</li> <li>• Strong leaders within target population to influence and reach new program participants</li> <li>• Strategic access to vulnerable children through mothers in prostitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overt structural, socio-cultural, spiritual and interpersonal opposition against a woman's growth and transformation</li> <li>• An unresponsive Church that hesitates to engage</li> <li>• Critiques and misperceptions from prostituted women and other related organizations</li> <li>• Lack of external funding opportunities and resources for sustained ministry</li> </ul>



## Looking Forward

Word Made Flesh Bolivia is committed to the slow and patient work of accompanying vulnerable persons in their journey to abundant life. We value depth and quality. So as we thoughtfully worked to identify future strategies, some idealistic dreams were honed, while aggressive actions were put in place for greater overall sustainability.

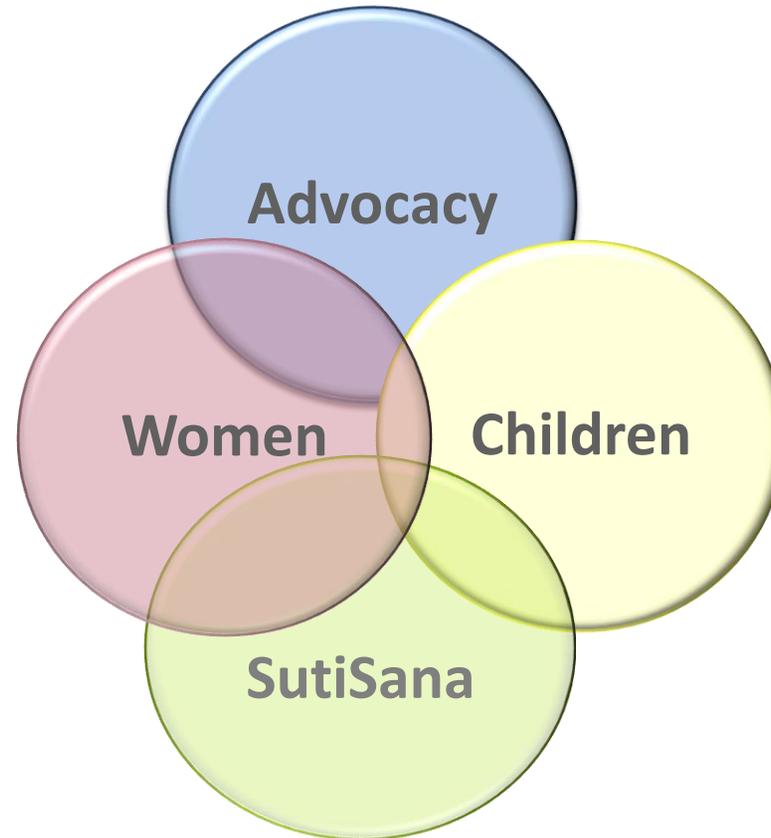
Our ministry model is now more accurately represented in 4 concentric and overlapping circles, each one unique in focus, but working in conjunction with the whole. Although we still value the importance of *presence* in a person's life and recognize that transformation is typically a journey comprised of many steps, to more clearly communicate our programming, we consolidated Presence & Paso a Paso to simply Women's Ministry. We also updated an antiquated mission model to more clearly show Advocacy in actual programmed activities.

Overall, we have identified three major areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership development throughout all programming, empowering women and children to be their own advocates for change, in themselves and those around them. We hope to encourage ownership, responsibility and personal growth while also opening opportunities for service and influence.
- Develop and implement an aggressive growth plan for SutiSana to become a self-sustaining social enterprise, through more efficient processes and a focused plan for production, marketing and sales. As both artisans and sales grow in stability and profitability, we plan to increase the number of employees to 25 women.
- Strengthen local partnerships on every level (Government, NGO's and Churches). Bolivia offers a wealth of untapped local opportunities that could directly benefit our population. Our focus in the coming years will be to establish and solidify those relationships.

We are in the process of designing and implementing tools that will improve each of these areas and feel confident that these changes will maximize the potential of even more vulnerable families in El Alto and beyond.

## Strategic Framework



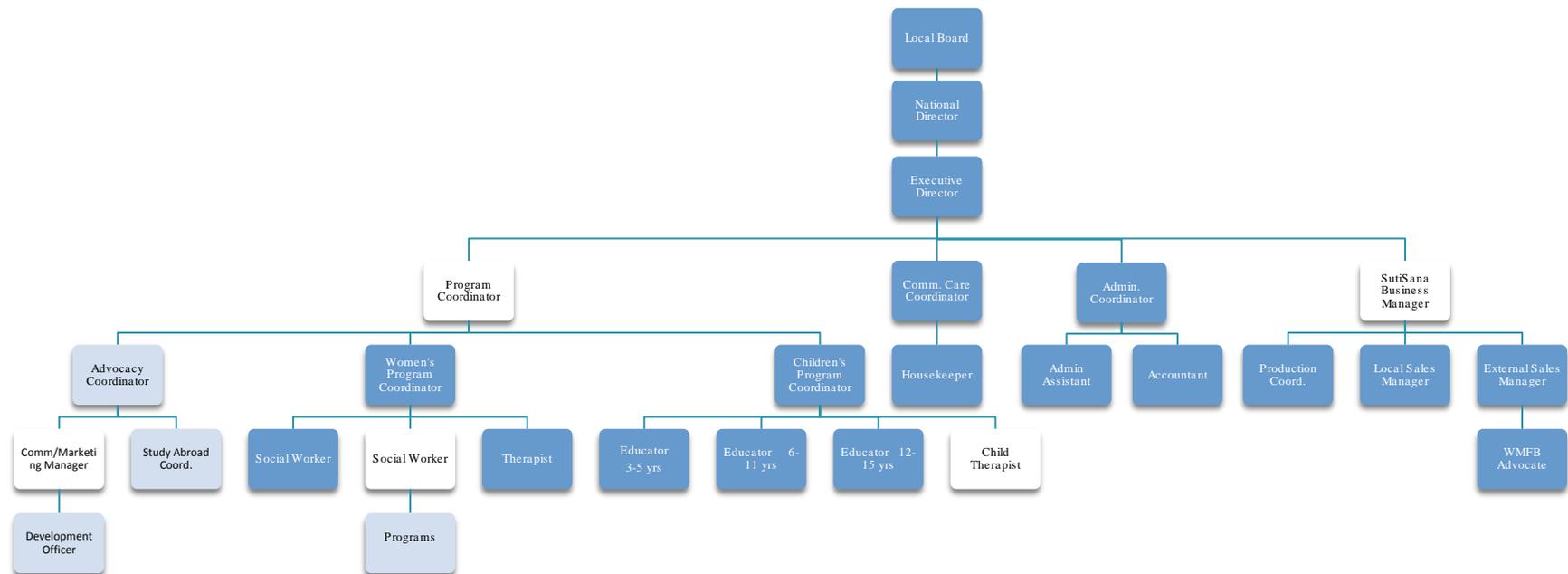
### Goal 2017-2020

**Reduce the physical, spiritual, economic and social vulnerability of prostituted women and their children, so they are free to enjoy life abundantly.**



## Future Organizational Chart

- Urgent staff need
- Current staff in new positions
- Current staff





## Objectives

<b>Women</b>	Prostituted women improve their quality of life through opportunities for change
	Accompany prostituted women in places of prostitution and other referential sites, encouraging them to seek new life alternatives
	Prostituted women find support for their physical, psychological, social and/or spiritual needs
	Prostituted women grow in technical, social, life and leadership skills
<b>Children</b>	Children affected by prostitution, in coordination with their parents or guardians, are empowered to break cycles of violence in their own lives
	Children find support and protection in emergencies or high-risk situations
	Children grow in their social, emotional, and spiritual development, while strengthening their leadership potential
	Children learn healthy habits for their overall physical well-being
	Children grow in cognitive development, empowered to reach their maximum potential
<b>SutiSana</b>	Provide dignified employment to survivors of prostitution
	Achieve self-sustainability for SutiSana
	Implement excellence in quality, service & business practice through Biblical principles
	Encourage professional growth in SutiSana artisans
<b>Advocacy</b>	Awaken an understanding of God's heart for the vulnerable within the Church & society
	Share WMFB's experience and expertise to encourage and equip the Church for service among the vulnerable
	Share WMFB's experience from the front lines, encouraging dignified treatment of vulnerable persons, within anti-violence circles



## Evaluation

Women		Women affected by prostitution improve their quality of life through opportunities for change
Results		Indicators
Accompany women in places of prostitution and other strategic locations, encouraging them to seek new life alternatives		% of women reached
	Regularly visit the red-light district and other strategic places to build relationships with women affected by prostitution	# visits annually # significant conversations
	Offer medical and legal attention in the red-light district	# women attended
Women affected by prostitution find support for their physical, psychological, social and/or spiritual needs		% of women who advance through stages of Victim-Survivor-Thriver
	Facilitate spaces and activities where women are supported, cared for, and receive relevant information	# women supported in ministry center
	Provide and/or connect women to services that meet their needs	# women receive support with an urgent need
	Promote spiritual and personal growth through therapy and activities	# women participate
Women affected by prostitution grow in technical, social, life and leadership skills		% of women advance in the stages of Victim-Survivor-Thriver
	Provide and/or connect women to classes for occupational or academic training	# women participate in classes for technical skills or education
	Help women define and pursue their professional and life goals	# women have defined goals
	Facilitate training for social and life-skills formation	# women participate in regular trainings



## Evaluation Continued

Children	Children affected by prostitution, in coordination with their parents or guardians, are empowered to break cycles of violence in their own lives	
Results	Indicators	
Children find support and protection in emergencies or high-risk situations	% of children supported in high-risk situations	
Intervene and provide direct assistance for children in emergencies and high-risk situations	# of cases attended	
Children grow in their social, emotional and spiritual development, while strengthening their leadership potential	# of children showing leadership qualities	
Coordinate events to celebrate special days and foster community	# of sponsored events	
Offer therapeutic spaces	# of counseling sessions	
Offer prevention-focused workshops and activities	# of participants	
Offer opportunities to learn about Biblical principles and grow spiritually	# of participants	
Children learn healthy habits for their overall physical well-being	% of children who practice at least two healthy habits	
Provide nutritious food	# of children served	
Offer workshops and activities to promote healthy habits	# participants	
Children grow in cognitive development, empowered to reach their maximum potential	% of children who grow in cognitive development and improve their school performance	
Support children in their academic performance	# of children who pass their to the next grade level	
Create spaces and activities to facilitate learning	# participants	



<b>SutiSana</b> Provide dignified employment to survivors of prostitution	
<b>Results</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Achieve self-sustainability for SutiSana	% of expenses covered by profits
Implement a business growth plan	% of implementation
Consolidate Marketing y Branding	% of uniform external representations
Build & maintain strong customer base	# of repeat clients
Strengthen revenue growth through local & external sales	% growth in new sales
Implement excellence in quality, service & business practice through Biblical principles	# of satisfied clients
Establish employee expectations and guidelines	% of protocol implemented # women trained
Implement efficient & effective production processes	# of processes implemented # employees trained
Evaluate customer service needs and improve services accordingly	# of improvements implemented
Encourage professional growth in SutiSana artisans (ownership & responsibility)	% of women in the Thriver stage
Train and equip prostituted women in Biblical ethics & professional standards	# of women who participate in sponsored activities
<b>Advocacy</b> Awaken an understanding of God's heart for the vulnerable within Church & society	
<b>Results</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Share WMFB's experience and expertise to encourage and equip the Church for service among the vulnerable	# churches actively engaged in mission
Provide local training and opportunities for service among the poor	# volunteers trained
Represent WMFB and share experience	# speaking engagements
Maintain active online presence	% online engagement
Share WMFB's experience from the front lines, encouraging and equip dignified treatment of vulnerable persons, within anti-violence circles	# events represented
Participate in local anti-violence/anti-trafficking initiatives to increase visibility work of WMFB	# event participation

