CHILE PUENTE PROGRAM
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I. INTRODUCTION

In January 2002, the Government of Chile’s Solidarity and Social Investment Fund (FOSIS) began a pilot program providing integral support to families living in extreme poverty\(^1\). The program began in four of the 13 regions of the country, in 57 of the 341 communes, and included 14,000 families of the total 225,000 families who are living in these circumstances.

Despite the success Chile’s Concertación governments\(^2\) in reducing the national poverty rate by half during the 1990s, the level of extreme poverty has remained constant since 1998. After four years of social policies implemented during sustained economic crisis, it became clear that the recuperation of an accelerated rate of economic growth alone would not ensure the reduction of extreme poverty. Both ethical principles and technical observations called for an intervention specifically designed to support this subgroup of the population.

The Puente (Bridge) Program, *between a family and their rights*, intends to introduce a new perspective to the social interventions with the poorest. This group, normally excluded from the social and assistance networks intended for them, lack the minimal necessities for survival and an adequate quality of life. The fundamental intention of this program is to provide integral psychosocial support to the family, a crucial component in overcoming poverty with this group in particular.

Puente was built using a family intervention strategy developed by a multidisciplinary work team from the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation (MIDEPLAN) that included specialists from several public organisms, among them FOSIS. The formulation of the strategy also incorporated previous experiences from programs implemented by local municipalities and FOSIS’ recent work with excluded social groups.

On May 21\(^{st}\), 2002, President Ricardo Lagos announced to the country his will for the State to decisively combat the scourge and “eradicate the misery” existent in the country before the end of his term of office in 2005. To this end, he announced the immediate creation of the Chile Solidario System and entrusted the Minister of MIDEPLAN, Cecilia Pérez, to head the efforts. At this time, FOSIS was entrusted with significantly expanding the coverage of The Puente Program in order to turn it into the “entrance” to the Chile Solidario System. As a result, the program’s coverage was expanded to 56,000 families residing in 336 communes, in addition to the challenge of covering a total of 210,000 families within four years.

FOSIS optimistically and decisively assumed this challenge, immediately dedicating itself to accomplishing the task.

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\(^1\) A family is considered to be living in extreme poverty if its monthly income is equal to or less than US $30 per capita.

\(^2\) The *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* is composed of El Partido Por La Democracia (PPD), El Partido Socialista (PS), and El Partido Radical Sociodemócrata (PRSD). This center-left coalition has governed Chile for three consecutive terms, from 1990 to present.
This dossier of documents is a synthesis of the experience up to this point. It contains various working documents which have been collected and logically organized to explain the development and components of the program.

The dossier begins with the commitment made by President Lagos before the nation entitled “A Chile Free From Misery”, which is an excerpt from his Presidential Address made before Congress. This is followed by a document detailing the Chile Solidario System, including its unique characteristics and components (produced by MIDEPLAN). An examination of this larger context will demonstrate how The Puente Program acts as an “entrance” to the Chile Solidario System.

The following document is a descriptive and analytic explanation of the fundamental aspects of The Puente Program, including its objectives, underlying theories, methodology, and systems of monitoring and evaluation. Finally, the dossier concludes with three documents, two written and the other graphic, which show the operational methods in the field. These are the instructions that approximately 2,000 family support counselors use in their work with each of the participating families during the home visits which take place during the two year intervention.

With gratitude for your interest in this dossier, I invite you to learn more about this governmental initiative.

Mario Ossandón Cañas
Executive Director (2000-2006)
II. A Chile Free From Misery

Excerpts from President Ricardo Lagos’ National Address to Congress
May 21, 2002

“We have learned that the most efficient path to fighting poverty is accelerated economic growth, however, at the same time we have learned that there is a subsector of our population whose poverty cannot be reduced by the simple thrust for growth. This is the sector of what we call “hard poverty”. It is extreme poverty, destitution, the population living below the line of hunger. These are families of five members who do not manage to gather $100,000 Pesos per month (US $145).”

“A country like Chile, on the doorstep of providing US $5,000 per capita, should once and for all end this scourge of poverty, extending a firm hand to those families who are suffering. The decision of my government is that, by the end of my term of office, the social traumas of destitution and misery will no longer exist.”

“Today, May 21st, 2002, we have set the goal of achieving a “Chile free from misery”, with no person subjected to the destitution and humiliation of having to rely on the charity of others to survive. We are speaking of approximately 200,000 families, in the majority of cases, who are outside of the social networks and do not even know about the benefits to which they have a right.”

“Our actions up to this point have not been enough for these Chileans. More of the same will not solve the problem, we need new instruments. We need, and this is very important, to go to where they are and begin to build a destiny of dignity for all.”

“These Chileans are outside of the protection system. They do not know about housing subsidies. They do not know about assistance pensions. They do not know about the health programs. We must blend several things. I have decided that all of these families will receive a modest monthly family protection voucher of $10,500 Pesos (US $15). We are speaking of a minimum amount of dignity to which each person has a right.”

“The recipients of these monthly vouchers of $10,500 Pesos will be preferentially female heads of households, wives and mothers of children. This is a commitment to the women of Chile since they often administrate the family budget, and they worry about education. It is often women who bring children to the health clinic. They watch over the present and future of their children. Therefore, this social protection voucher will be given in conjunction with the existing programs and instruments.”

“To our fellow Chileans, for whom life has been adverse, we want to extend a hand of solidarity and generosity. In this, we are speaking of this new program “Chile Solidario”. For the first time in our history, the poorest of the poor will have guaranteed access to health, education, and social security. In this manner, we are building a Chile of justice and solidarity.”

“We are not going to stand with our arms folded. We are going to go where they are. We do not want to simply give subsidies. We want to see their children study. We want them to have healthcare. We want to incorporate them into social networks, into society as a whole- For this we must build a bridge between these people and their rights, which they are able to use to overcome their conditions of extreme poverty.”

Valparaíso, Address before Congress. May 21, 2002
III. Chile Solidario

Chile Solidario is a social protection system, designed by the Chilean Government, reaching out to the 225,000 families who live in extreme poverty.

This integral protection system emerged from a visualization of extreme poverty as a multidimensional problem consisting of the following variables:

- Insufficient monetary income
- Scarce development of Human Capital
- Weak Social Capital, and
- Vulnerability to risks such as illness, accidents and unemployment, among other things.

This system is designed to utilize State resources along with the capacities of the beneficiary families to transform each of the aforementioned variables. In this manner, Chile Solidario can make guarantees to ensure that families living in extreme poverty, live with dignity.

II. The Mission of Chile Solidario:

To incorporate the families living in extreme poverty into the Social Protection network of the State in a guaranteed and/or preferential manner which involves linkages to, interaction with and the reexamination of the existent program offering.

III. The Incorporation of Beneficiaries

The families are selected from the information provided by the CAS II, and will be gradually connected with and incorporated into the System:

- 56,055 families in the year 2002.
- 60,318 families in the year 2003.
- 15,675 single-persons over 65 years of age in the year 2003.
- 59,806 families in the year 2004.
- 33,219 families in the year 2005.

IV. What does the system consist of, and how does it work?

The families activate the Social Protection System by signing a Family Contract agreeing to participate in the program and committing themselves to work towards improving their conditions of living.

The Family contract formalizes the commitment between the Government and the family. The Government assumes the responsibility of making a set of support systems and
resources available to the family members. The family commits itself to working towards overcoming the most precarious factors in their lives and responding to the necessities which they themselves have identified, making use of the opportunities that the social network offers to them.

V. Components of the System:

a.- Psychosocial Support (The Puente Program, executed by FOSIS):

The psychosocial support consists of personalized accompaniment by a Family Support Counselor, a professional or field expert, who works with the family to complete a series of work sessions during home visits. The fundamental role of this professional is to link the families with the public and private network of services in the areas of: personal identification; health; education; family dynamics; housing conditions; employment; income; capacity-building and occupational insertion; improvement of academic and occupational competencies; technical aid for disabled persons; prevention and rehabilitation from drug addiction, among others. This accompaniment continues for 24 months as a stimulus to develop the strengths within the family nucleus.

b.- The Family Protection Voucher:

This voucher is allocated to the family in decreasing amounts during its 24 month participation in the program:

- Chilean Pesos $10,500 (US $15) received in each of the initial six months
- Chilean Pesos $8,000 (US $11.60) received monthly, from month 7 to the end of the first year.
- Chilean Pesos $5,500 (US $8) received monthly between month 13 and the middle of the second year.
- Chilean Pesos $3,500 (US $5) received each of the final six months.

This benefit is associated with the completion of the terms outlined in the Family Contract, signed by each family and given to the female head of the household.

The families who, after receiving 24 months of personalized support and having completed all conditions of the contract which delineated their process of overcoming the conditions of extreme poverty, will automatically become recipients of a Protection Allowance equivalent to the amount of the family subsidy. They will receive the allowance for three years with the purpose of encouraging and stimulating a successful graduation from this program.

The family who upon the twelfth month have not achieved the goals to which they committed themselves will leave the psychosocial component of the System and will no longer receive the Family Protection Voucher. They will instead receive a Protection Allocation.
c.- Guaranteed Monetary Subsidies:

The 225,000 families integrated into the System will be guaranteed the traditional monetary subsidies which are their right as families living in extreme poverty. These are:

- The Family Subsidy (SUF), for all members under 18 years of age.
- The Assistance Pension for the Elderly (PASIS), for people over 65 years of age.
- The Assistance Pension for the Disabled (PASIS), for all disabled persons who are heads of a household.
- The Assistance Pension (PASIS) for people with mental disabilities.
- The Pure Water Subsidy (SAP), which covers 100% of water bills for up to 15 cubic meters of monthly consumption (the current subsidy covers only 75%)

d.- Preferential access to social promotion, occupational and preventative programs:

- Improvement of academic and occupational competencies
- Technical assistance for the disabled
- Drug prevention and rehabilitation
- Special attention to high-risk children
- Domestic violence prevention and support services
- Preferential subsidies given for employers hiring the unemployed heads of households pertaining to the families incorporated into this system.
- Social Security programs for all unemployed heads of households of the families participating in the system, beginning after the required legislation is approved in the year 2005.

VI. What are the expected results?

The expected results of the System Chile Solidario in the year 2005 are:

1. The System should be institutionalized and in operation.
2. The completion of a registry of the participants in the System, including the 225,000 poorest families and other beneficiaries who are living below the poverty line.
3. 15,675 adults over 65 years of age having overcome poverty by receiving the PASIS allocation for the elderly (distributed beginning in the year 2003).
4. 209,398 families supported by the Family Protection Voucher.
5. 225,000 families directly receiving the monetary subsidies to which they have a right.
VII. Institutions Within the System

MIDEPLAN will be responsible for the System in its entirety, undertaking the following functions:

- To administrate the budgeted resources necessary for the System’s operation.
- To centralize and update all data of the families incorporated in the system.
- To certify the eligibility of the families.
- To coordinate and focus the integration of these families into the public social promotion programs for families living in extreme poverty.
- To establish, coordinate and supervise the national and local support networks available to poor families.

Operating Organisms:

a) The Executive Secretariat of Chile Solidario: composed of MIDEPLAN professionals whose objectives are:
   - To structure the systems of Chile Solidario
   - To form linkages between the Chile Solidario System and the public and private institutions that offer the services necessary to incorporate families living in extreme poverty into the social protection network.

b) The Technical Committee: composed of all institutions that offer programs applicable to these families. The committee is coordinated by MIDEPLAN with the objectives to:
   - Provide institutional support for the implementation of the Chile Solidario System.
   - To serve as a connection between the System and the programs offered by other member institutions (coordinating, approving and generating inter-institutional agreements).

c) The Regional Executive Secretariat, whose functions are:
   - To structure the Executive Secretariat in the Region- a responsibility of the Secretary of Regional Planning.
   - To create a Regional Executive Committee, with the participation of the Local Planning Service and FOSIS, presided over by the local Intendant.
   - To create a Regional Technical Committee.
   - To create a Regional Consultative committee which integrates organisms of civil society.
   - To implement the Beneficiary Information System at the regional level.
   - To produce a System pertinent to the local realities
   - To coordinate with regional institutions.
   - To supervise the selection of families.

d) The Regional Executive Committee, whose functions are:
   - To analyze the regional policy context and to establish the Chile Solidarity System.
To adopt steps to ensure the viability of the Chile Solidario System with regional policies.
To identify possible kinks within the System as it is implemented in the region.

e) The Regional Technical Committee, whose functions are:
- To provide institutional support for the regional implementation of the Chile Solidario System.
- To recommend steps to perfect the operations of the Chile Solidario System.
- To serve as a connection between the System and the programs offered by other member institutions (coordinating, approving and generating interinstitutional agreements).

f) The Regional Civil Society Consultative Committee: this committee, which only exists on the regional level, is defined as an instrument to support the functioning of the system and foster regional collaboration.

VII. The Role of Municipalities in the Chile Solidario:

a) The participation of Municipalities is indispensable for the installation and operation of the Chile Solidario within communes.
b) Each Municipality is formally invited to participate in the Puente program, and receive a written invitation which should be accepted or declined in written form.
c) If a Municipality decides not to participate, the program is not carried out in that commune.
d) Once a Municipality has accepted the invitation to participate, the installation of a local Family Intervention Unit is begun.
e) The planned coverage of the program and the availability of Family Support Counselors within existing local networks determines the number of additional Family Support Counselors needed for the program. Additional Family Support Counselors will be financed by the Chile Solidario System.

The Program recognizes Municipalities as local level institutions which are involved in almost all public services and benefits directed to the poor. As such, it is impossible to execute this Program if the respective Municipality will not commit to participating.

After five years of implementing the Puente Program, the Ministry of Planning and FOSIS decided to begin a process to decentralize the Social Protection System. The first stage of certification will allow the Municipalities that successfully complete the process to receive resources to execute the Puente Program in their territories.

A second level of certification will allow the Municipalities not only to receive the resources to implement the Puente Program, but also to receive resources to execute Housing Conditions Programs. And those Municipalities that complete the third level will receive additional resources to directly execute other public programs oriented to families participating in the Chile Solidario System.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
<th>The Chile Solidario System</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Role of the State</td>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Pro-Active</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The social offerings made by the State towards this group of Chileans are based on the demands which the potential beneficiaries make on the public services. This means that the most needy individuals or families are isolated and uninformed of the network established by the state, which are often infrequently accessed by the neediest.</td>
<td>Through its national network, the Chile Solidario System involves a more active role for the State in identifying the neediest families and attempting to make public offerings that understand their needs and effectively reach out to them. Personal contact with each family occurs during the 24 months of psychosocial support through home visits.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Focus of the Interventions</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>The Family Unit</td>
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<td>The current offerings such as the Family Subsidy (SUF) and the assistance pensions are organized to attack social problems at the individual level, without taking into consideration the characteristics of the nuclear family to which this individual belongs.</td>
<td>The focus of the Chile Solidario System’s interventions is the family unit, seeing individual problems in the context of the specific situation of the family to which he/she belongs. The 24 month Protection Voucher and the personalized Family Contract, ensure that each family has automatic access to the networks that serve its specific needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Type of Offers</td>
<td>Uncoordinated Offerings</td>
<td>An Integrated System</td>
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<td>The social programs currently offered to this group of the population are dispersed among many institutions and programs which rarely interact among themselves. As a result, the 90+ programs directed towards the low-income population do not necessarily have coinciding goals or uniform eligibility criterion.</td>
<td>The Chile Solidario System integrates the various programs offered to this group into a coherent and coordinated System. This forms a unique institution that supports the diverse offerings while also promoting their efficiency. This will bring about a reengineering of the organizations and programs directed towards this population, transforming MIDEPLAN into the institution responsible for the social protection networks of the government.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Integration-Assistance-Development</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>A coherent combination of assistance and development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The current dispersion of institutions and programs attempt to provide to assistential and development programs without achieving either effectively.</td>
<td>The Chile Solidario System cohesively integrates the needs of each family group, the assistential and development interventions available in order to address the diverse expressions of extreme poverty within each family and provide them with tools greater than assistential programs to overcome this condition. For this, the keys are family support counselor assigned to each family and the Family Contract signed by each family in which they make commitments that become the starting point for each specific case.</td>
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5. Protection from disaster

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<th>None</th>
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<tr>
<td>The system of offerings made to this group of the population do not include any institutional protection for families affected by disaster such as death of a disability which could have a dramatic effect on vulnerable families.</td>
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<th>Social Security Preparations</th>
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<td>The Chile Solidario System includes a Social Security plan for unemployed heads of households of these families, which is the responsibility of the State. It assures life and disability insurance, and will supplement personal retirement savings of those who retire in extreme poverty (PASIS). Together with the government’s guaranteed healthcare plan, this will ensure complete Social Security coverage for the poorest families in the country.</td>
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6. Manner of Accessing the Subsidies

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<th>Application</th>
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<td>The current system to access subsidies requires that families apply to for spots within the annual quota. Many times this implies that the poorest families spend months on waiting lists in case that places are freed or the quota is increased.</td>
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<th>Guarantees as a Right</th>
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<td>The Chile Solidario System radically changes the form in which the poorest families access monetary programs. The System guarantees access as a right, ensuring that these offerings are well focused and empower the poorest families by the State. The entrance to the system also includes 24 months of psychosocial support and a monthly Protection Voucher of decreasing value. In addition, the families are guaranteed access to three permanent resources: (1) guaranteed access to monetary subsidies, (2) preferential access occupational insertion programs and (3) social security provisions.</td>
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7. Role of the Family in relation to the programs offered

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<th>Recipient</th>
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<td>Once the program offering has been allocated, currently the family assumes the role of a passive recipient with no commitment to make changes in their lives.</td>
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<th>Commitment of family efforts</th>
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<td>The families incorporated into the Chile Solidario System are required to sign a formal contract committing themselves to focus on improving their living conditions for the next 24 month period. Terms of the contract may include: children’s school attendance, regular health check-ups for elderly family members, healthy adult family members may be obligated to accept a job offered etc.</td>
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8. Incentives for the Beneficiaries to Improve their State

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<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries are unconditionally awarded the benefits based on their socioeconomic situation. If their living conditions improve, they automatically lose these benefits, therefore discouraging a family’s efforts to increase their income.</td>
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<th>Structure of incentives to encourage poverty reduction</th>
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<tr>
<td>The overall structure of the Chile Solidario System, including the conditions stipulated in the Family Contract, provide encouragement for the family to improve their living conditions. This is clearly demonstrated in the decreasing value of the Family Protection Vouchers during the initial 24 month period, in which time opportunities for the family to improve their own income become available. At the end of the 24 months the Voucher is replaced by the Family Subsidy and other additional subsidies which are maintained according to existing criteria.</td>
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The Bridge- between a family and its rights

IV. Building the Bridge:
Principles and Expected Results

INTRODUCTION

“The Bridge (“Puente”) - between a family and its rights” is a program designed by FOSIS to be an entrance for 209,500 families to participate in Chile Solidario System, between the years 2002 – 2005. This System was implemented by the Ministry of Planning in response to President Lagos’ demand to improve the conditions of the 849,169 Chileans who are living in extreme poverty. In 2004, Chile Solidario became a law of the Republic, unanimously approved by Congress. The law 19.949 and its respective regulations structure the function of the Social Protection System in our nation.

The critical challenge of this task has been preparing an intervention methodology that is relevant to the characteristics of these families who are living in extreme poverty. The intervention developed is based upon the work of more than 1,500 family support counselors, members of the existing local networks, who provide personalized support to each family during work sessions in the home. These counselors are incorporated into the Family Intervention Unit, a local body including representatives of the main institutions and organizations that work with the families living in extreme poverty in each commune.

The Puente (Bridge) Program’s family work materials aim to develop a “tool box” of methodologies that enable a family and its support counselor to establish an atmosphere of cooperation and trust throughout the process of the intervention. This positive relationship allows the family to openly share its history, its priorities, and information about its capital resources; and to be comfortable working with the support counselor to set goals and form connections to social, community and institutional support networks. The support counselor encourages and supports the family in strengthening the seven categories of “support pillars” of family life: personal identification, health, education, family dynamics, housing conditions, employment and income.

It is hoped that at the conclusion of the program, at least 70% of these participants will be “families who support each other, who are integrated into their local surroundings, who take advantage of the social programs offered to the poor which meet their needs, who are integrated into existing social networks and with an income above the line of extreme poverty.”

PRINCIPLES OF THE PROGRAM

Chile has made great advances in the fight to reduce poverty- including reducing by half the number of people living in both poverty and extreme poverty during the 1990s. However, this rate of reduction has considerably decelerated, most notably from 1998-2000. In fact, during this period the percentage of poor households decreased very little, while the number of people living in extreme poverty showed a small but nevertheless significant increase.
According to the National Socioeconomic Survey (CASEN) of 2002, 4.5% of households (177,613 families) were living in conditions of extreme poverty, which is to say that their economic income was insufficient to provide a basic food basket. This is to say that 849,169 people (5.7% of the national population) are living in these conditions within the borders of Chile.

Without a doubt, measuring poverty using mainly the “household income” variable is a limited instrument for measuring a complex phenomenon that is not only economic, but also of a psychosocial and cultural character. However, it is no less true that household income is an indicator reflecting limited opportunities to satisfy an individual’s essential necessities, and therefore, that 850,000 Chileans do not receive an income sufficient to meet their basic needs.

When considering these facts it must be highlighted that the characteristics of extreme poverty have changed, making those living in this situation today much more vulnerable than they were 10 years ago. Today a core of “hard poverty” exists which conventional social programs and public intervention strategies are not been able to penetrate.

Interventions based on monetary subsidies are insufficient to address the multiple causes of the cycle of poverty, stretching from generation to generation within a family. Breaking this cycle requires the design and implementation of integral strategies that are able to simultaneously transform the myriad of expressions of poverty in peoples’ lives.

Achieving significant results in the reduction of poverty does not depend solely on improving instruments, mechanisms and criterion of focalization, but instead putting into practice interventions that are more relevant and of a higher quality. By responding to the specific characteristics of people living in extreme poverty it will be possible to guarantee better results.

One of the most important criticisms that can be made of conventional social policies is their atomization. Social policies that focus on satisfying basic material needs, instead of focusing on the person, do not have a means to guarantee integral changes. From this need for a more complete view of the individual, came the principle to implement intervention models that execute work with groups before work with individuals. Therefore, it became fundamental to identify the family as the new unit for intervention given that the members share a privileged place to generate the synergetic processes necessary to overcome their situation of extreme poverty.

In this context, and with the intention of collaborating in the goals set by President Lagos, MIDEPLAN assumed the responsibility of forming the “Working Group for Families in Extreme Poverty”. This body’s purpose was to design an intervention strategy of an integral and intersectoral character, organized upon the base of programs and services offered, oriented networks and assuming the family as the area of intervention.

Components of the “Integral Intervention Strategy for Families Living in Extreme Poverty”

The “integral intervention strategy for families living in extreme poverty” is a model designed, implemented, and evaluated for the purpose of providing families with an
The Bridge - between a family and its rights

integral offer of support systems, services and benefits. The principle purpose of this strategy is to support families in improving their living conditions by generating opportunities and providing the resources they need to develop or recuperate their capacities and determination.

The strategy focuses on ensuring the presence of the minimum conditions a family needs to improve their quality of life. As a means to this end, psychosocial support is provided to create or restore the family’s capacities and basic functions. In addition, links drawing the family into local network offering services and benefits are developed. Complementing these linkages, specific suggestions are made to the local development agents to ensure that the services and benefits developed for low-income families do in fact reach the families in extreme poverty that need them.

Finally, the strategy proposes the implementation of systems aimed to generate conditions and opportunities necessary to develop community initiatives, and to foster association between families and other actors in the community.

The implementation and development of this strategy is intimately related to the local area where it is carried out, especially since a family’s physical sense of belonging encourages them to access and act in their local networks. In addition, it should be highlighted that the technical principles and methodologies rely on the participation of the local operators and the relationship that they establish with the families, institutions and actors present in the territory.

Theoretical Framework

Although there is lengthy work experience within this area, the socio-cultural particularities that characterize poverty today must be taken into consideration by any program attempting to work in these issues. For this reason, it is indispensable to analyze and justify each component of the strategy and its function with theoretical arguments that support the intervention model. The present conceptual framework consists of three focus areas: i) social capital; ii) social networks; and, iii) crisis intervention.

In the case of “social capital”, a comprehensive focus is needed to analyze the resources and opportunities available that enable people to undertake their own development processes. Incorporating the perspective of social capital into this intervention strategy orients action towards improving people’s capacity to participate in the solution of their own problems. In addition, this concept illuminates the manner in which materials, services, resources and opportunities should be offered to people are outside of institutional networks (only participating in short-reaching horizontal networks), and therefore have not previously been able to access them. This is a great contribution learning how to transmit capacities for people to autonomously resolve these and other problems.

In the case of “social networks”, it must be recognized that the provision of partial or specific solutions do not generate, in themselves, a global effect that contributes to overcoming critical conditions of poverty. As such, networks reflect a synergetic effect produced by joining integral and complementary resources. Therefore, this intervention strategy recovers the concepts of intervention and action in networks.
Finally, the focus on “intervention in crisis” refers to the therapeutic aspect of the intervention. This component is of a short duration and contains concrete goals in terms of the prevention of psychological problems caused by intense external stress factors affecting people who live in a chronic state of vulnerability. This infers the necessity to prioritize responses to the circumstances that paralyze the family, inhibiting its ability to function. A sense of control over their lives, their emotions and their circumstances created by their conditions of extreme poverty must be restored to the family.

Suppositions and hypothesis of intervention of the strategy

“Suppositions” are the central premises and affirmations that are assumed as a starting point for the intervention. As such they are a basis for the actions developed. The following are the suppositions made by the proposed strategy:

i. It is necessary to use a qualitative focus when working with poverty.
ii. Poverty has both socioeconomic and cultural causes and effects.
iii. Poverty involves both material and subjective aspects.
iv. Extreme poverty is a phenomenon that can be eliminated.
v. Extreme poverty does not necessarily prevent the development of social capital.
vi. One form of developing social capital is to generate or expand networks.
vii. The interventions to reduce destitution require initial support centered on reinforcement of psychoemotional development.
viii. The most efficient way of reducing extreme poverty is to work in the area of the family
ix. Viability of a social intervention of extreme poverty depends on the presence of operators who work directly with the families.
x. The processes that make the reduction of extreme poverty possible require permanent and sustained work.

The “intervention hypothesis” reflects the central question to which it responds: how and in what measure can a strategy significantly change these conditions of extreme poverty? In response, the hypothesis is the following: Given the characteristics of extreme poverty, the principle tool that can be put at the disposition of the families is the presence of an operator who, by carrying out a personalized intervention, connects the families to the networks and opportunities that can contribute to the progressive satisfaction their basic necessities which were previously unfulfilled. This increases the efficiency of other initiatives undertaken since it encourages the integration of persons who were previously excluded and unable to access these services.

Within the strategic framework described, the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation asked FOSIS to create a program providing integral support to families living in extreme poverty. To fulfill this responsibility, FOSIS designed The Puente Program.

What ideas are associated a "bridge"?

When one thinks of bridge, one mentally imagines concepts such as: to cross, to move past, to arrive at another place, to achieve a goal, a path, link, connection, relationship, union, encounter, communication, integration...
**What is the purpose of a bridge?**

Everyday uses of a bridge include: *crossing to from one place to another, uniting distant places, bringing people closer, arriving to isolated places, replacing deteriorated paths, connecting and integrating, getting to know others, shortening a distance*…

**What is a bridge?**

A variety of terms can be used to explain a bridge: *a mechanism, an instrument, a construction, a structure, a means of uniting two separate places, an element of integration, an investment*…

**What is needed to build a bridge?**

Finally, when we ask ourselves what we need to build a bridge, the following are the most frequent responses:

- It is necessary to undertake feasibility studies.
- It requires specialists who can calculate whether it can withstand stresses and what the impact this new channel of integration will have on the population.
- First the foundations must be built, then the unifying road, and lastly the railing.
- It requires a lot of work that must be done in stages by many people working as a coordinated team.
- A firm structure is needed, including strong materials. In addition, it is necessary to repair both paths that the bridge will unite.

We consider the answers to the previous four questions to contain key ideas. The Puente Program intends to collaborate with families so that they will be capable to construct their own bridge. The Family Support Counselors are the construction specialists who guarantee that the necessary foundations are present, that the materials are adequate and that the structural design fulfills the functions for which the bridge is needed. Once constructed, with a lot of teamwork and coordination, the family can cross from one place to the other and integrate themselves into the networks that support and accompany them.

**HOW IS THE BRIDGE BUILT?**

The Puente Program fosters and supports the installation of a Family Intervention Unit, coordinated by the corresponding municipality, in each of the communes where the 225,000 poorest families live. The Family Support Counselors are incorporated into this Unit in proportion to the number of families who must be reached. The Family Intervention Unit is supported by a Local Intervention Network, which brings together representatives of both public and private institutions and organizations that offer services or benefits which
support the minimum conditions for an acceptable quality of life established by the Program.

The Program is built upon the foundation of four principle components:

**A. PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT TO THE FAMILY**

This component is carried out through the Family Support Counselors as they establish a personal relationship with each of the families to whom they are assigned. The counselor works with each family during home visits which occur with diminishing frequency throughout the 24 months (two years) of the intervention. The intervention includes two distinct phases:

(i) An intensive work phase with the family, consisting of 14 work sessions over a period of four months. The methodology used focuses on a gameboard, designed especially for the program, which is progressively completed as the intervention progresses. As the end of this intensive phase, it is hoped that the family has achieved the set of minimum conditions set by the program. This phase of work it entitled “the construction of the family’s bridge”.

(ii) The accompaniment, monitoring and follow-up of this phase are carried out with respect to the specific commitments that the family has made in their own FAMILY CONTRACT, signed at the conclusion of the first phase. The clauses delineated in this contract are particular to the characteristics of each family and focus on sustaining the achievements of phase one.

**B. FORMATION, CAPACITY BUILDING AND ACCOMPANIMENT**

This component is directed specifically to the Family Intervention Units of the participating communes. This process was designed specifically for the Family Support Counselors, and focuses on sharing the goals and special characteristics of this program, transmitting the familial work methodology, and supervising the work done in the field, while at the same time supporting the Family Intervention Unit’s efforts.

**C. THE REGIONAL FUND FOR INITIATIVES**

The program intends to create a Fund for Initiatives in each region of the country. This Fund is composed of both public and private resources, is directed towards financing projects that deliver previously non-existent services or benefits needed by the families in order to achieve the minimal conditions necessary for an acceptable quality of life. In this sense, it is actually a fund for innovation, supporting initiatives that complement the public services specifically directed to the participating families.

A Regional Board, which includes representatives from the public and private sectors, selects the projects relevant to each region.

**D. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The program includes a monitoring and evaluation system incorporating the characteristics of each family. This on-line system, which is confidential and generated by the family support counselors, collects the information learned about a family in each work session.
With this system it is possible to observe the progress of the program in each commune, province, region or the nation. It also provides the opportunity to analyze statistics concerning the main characteristics of the participants, their success in achieving the minimal conditions of an acceptable quality of life through this intervention, and the mobilization of resources in their favor, among other things.

**The Supporting Pillars of the Bridge**

The program’s efforts are directed towards supporting families so that they can work to construct seven “pillars of support” in their lives. These pillars correspond to the categories of necessities that will be dealt with throughout the intervention: personal identification, health, education, family dynamics, housing conditions, employment and income.

For each of these pillars, the program has defined a set of minimum conditions that the families should attain as a result of this intervention and the work done with them. Many of these can be achieved at the beginning of the intervention. In this case, the family support counselor must work with the family to reinforce them and ensure that they are maintained over time. In the cases in which the minimum conditions are not immediately achieved, they then become priority work areas for the family.

Examples of the minimum conditions in each category include:

**PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION:**
- All members of the family must be incorporated into the Civil Registry and have an identity card.
- All adult family members should have their background records normalized.
- Members of a family who have a disability should be recognized by the Commission of Preventative Medicine for Disability (COMPIN) and registered in the National Registry of Disability, if necessary.

**HEALTH:**
- The family must be registered in the Service for Primary Health Care
- Children under six years of age should have their vaccinations up-to-date according to the guidelines established by the Ministry of Health.
- Members of the family who suffer from a chronic illness should be under the supervision of a doctor from the corresponding health center.
- Family members with a disability, who would benefit from rehabilitation, should be participating in a rehabilitative program.
- All members of the family should be given personal health maintenance and general health information.

**EDUCATION:**
- If the mother works and there is no other adult able to care for the children, children under six years of age should attend a daycare program.
- Children under 15 years of age should attend an educational institution, or be in the process of reintegration if they have previously dropped-out.
- Children with a disability who are able to study should be incorporated into the standard or special education system.
- Adults should have a positive and responsible attitude towards school and education, at least recognizing the necessity that the child participates in formal education systems.
- The adults should be able to read and write (or those who desire to learn to read, write and perform basic mathematics should be in the process of learning).

FAMILY DYNAMICS:
- The family should have the daily custom of discussing topics like habits, schedules and play spaces.
- The family should have adequate abilities to deal with conflict.
- There should be clear rules within the family.
- There should be a fair distribution of household chores.
- The family should be aware of the community resources and development programs available through local networks (sports clubs, senior citizens’ centers, action groups, and community organizations, among others).
- In the case that there have been incidents of domestic violence, the persons directly involved in the situation should be incorporated into some type of support program.
- A family with a child in foster care or in an institution should make regular visits.
- A family with a child in the penal system should support him/her and collaborate in the rehabilitation process.

HOUSING CONDITIONS:
- The situation of the family, with respect to ownership of the land and the home in which they live, should be clearly defined.
- If the family wishes to apply to housing program, they should be in the application process.
- They should have access to clean water, an adequate energy system, and adequate sewage and waste disposal systems.
- The home should not be susceptible to floods, or have severe leakage and humidity problems.
- Each member of the family should have a bed with sheets, blankets and a pillow.
- The family should have the basic kitchen and dining materials to meet its needs.
- The environment around the home should be pollution-free.

EMPLOYMENT:
- At least one member of the family should have a regular job and a stable salary.
- No child under 15 years of age should leave school in order to work.
- All unemployed persons should be registered with the Municipal Employment Information Office.

INCOME:
- All members of the family who have the right to the Family Support Subsidy should be receiving it.
- All members of the family who have the right to Social Security Assistance (PASIS) should be receiving it.
- The family should have an income above the line of extreme poverty.
- The family should have a budget organized in terms of their resources and priority needs.
A participating family has successfully graduated from the program once they have achieved all of the minimum conditions corresponding to their particular situation. The measurement of the program’s success for at least 70% of participating families successfully graduate from the 24-month program.
# Families Participating in The Puente Program 2002 through 2005

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**Source:** FOSIS, Santiago de Chile, May 2002

*The evolution of the initiative can be followed on The Puente Program Website, accessed through the main FOSIS website at [www.fosis.cl](http://www.fosis.cl) or [www.programapuente.cl](http://www.programapuente.cl)*
V. Family Work Materials

The educative materials, specially prepared for the families participated in The Puente Program, aim to develop a “tool box” of methodologies that enable a family and its support counselor to establish an atmosphere of cooperation and trust throughout the process of the intervention. This positive relationship allows the family to openly share its history, its priorities, and information about its capital resources, and to be comfortable working with the support counselor to set goals and form connections to social, community and institutional support networks.

Materials in the Toolbox

The Pamphlet

The support counselors present each family with a PUENTE pamphlet, sealed and complete with the family name, to keep in the home as a gift from the Program. In addition to symbolizing the family’s commitment to participate in this initiative, it is a tool to record the stages of the intervention and to visualize the progressive construction of the family’s own Bridge.

Components:

The Pamphlet shows drawings of the family’s home, the village network of services, and the bridge which will be built connecting the two. To personalize and visually mark the family’s starting point and achievements, the pamphlet packet contains the following stickers:

- **The Family Tree** shows the make-up of the participating family. The family representative places the auto-adhesive figures, representing each member’s sex and age group, around the image of the house according to his/her perception of the person’s role in the family and their arrangement within the home.

- The stickers depicting the seven Support Pillars are used to record the family’s priorities within these categories, beginning with the circumstances of most concern (in position 1) and ending with those of least concern (in position 7).

- Game cards entitled “materials to build The Bridge”, and the corresponding stickers, record the capital initially available in the family’s “Storage Shed”. These records are continually updated as the family progresses through the stages of the Program. The job of the support counselor is to help the family to recognize its possessions (physical capital), significant relationships (social capital), and each member’s abilities, knowledge, skills and behaviors (personal capital) as resources which should be valued in family life and by the members.

- These stickers record the family’s achievement of intermediate goals, which are commitments continuously set together with the support counselor in the series of contracts signed throughout the program. When the family has completed a task, its progress is shown by painting a letter of the word PUENTE in the center of the game
board and/or sticking auto-adhesive stars on the figures that represent the family members. Traffic light stickers are also put on the railings of the BRIDGE in order to illuminate its construction.

- These stickers record the activation or reactivation of the family’s local NETWORK, represented by the public or private institutions accessible to the family. Activation occurs when the family must interact with one of these institutions in order to achieve the minimum conditions defined for each work category. As each component of the local network is activated or reactivated, stickers representing the institution are put on the right side of the game board.

The family continually signs work contracts in which they commit themselves to achieving the set goals which will help them to attain the aforementioned minimum conditions in each category. Upon completing the contract, the auto-adhesive figures representing the family members who have participated in achieving the goals are given a star as a prize.

In addition, the accomplishment of these tasks and/or contracts will also be recorded by painting a letter of the word “PUENTE” and illuminating it with traffic light stickers, with the goal of progressing in the construction of the Bridge.

**Thematic Sections of the Game Board and Rules of the Game**

These eight sections of the game board can be joined together, creating one large game board. Each section is an independent game related to one of the seven support pillar categories defined by the program. The content specifically focuses on working towards each of the minimum conditions within the seven pillars that the family should reach as a result of the intervention. The family support counselor makes these materials available for the family to “play” from the fifth work session onwards.

The game boards are accompanied by dice, which determine the number of spaces that the player must advance or retreat, and a game piece representing the family in its space on the board. In addition, there are 84 cards which contain (a) questions to assess the family representative’s knowledge of the category, and (b) specific situations which the player must resolve as a test. The purpose of these cards is to begin a conversation during the game which may address difficulties in responding to the questions on game cards, or initiate discussions centered on transforming the tasks that the player perceives as impossible into the material of a work contract with a determined time limit. In addition, the cards reinforce the information the player will need in order to activate or reactivate interaction with the institutions that will support the family in overcoming its condition of extreme poverty. Each section of the game board includes prize cards to encourage the player.

**RULES OF THE GAME**

1. “Start” :The Opening Section of Game Board

In opening section of the game board there is a space in the sky for the family representative to place one of the four cards entitled “Weather for building the Bridge”.

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The player chooses a Weather card that reflects his or her feelings as he/she begins the game (ex. calm and sunny, stormy, mixed), and puts it in the appropriate space. At the conclusion of the session, the person may re-consider the Weather card he/she has chosen and may change it for one that represents his/her current feelings.

The player places the card representing the “supporting pillar of my family’s life” that he or she has chosen to work on during the session on the start arrow of the board. The other six cards representing additional support pillars of family life are placed at the side of the house.

Once the support pillar has been chosen, the family support counselor selects the corresponding section of the game board and instructs the player to roll the dice. All boards have twelve drawings that symbolize a path with twelve steps.

2. THE PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD

The institutions directly related to the tasks of the Personal Identification category appear on this section of the game board. These include the Civil Registry and the Military Recruiting Office, in addition to other offices that represent the procedures that each person must undergo in to complete the tasks of this category.

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

Knowledge:

- Who in your family has an identity card?
- Has anyone in your family ever been asked for their background documents?
- Do you know anyone with a disability?
- Have you ever been asked for a birth certificate to complete a transaction?

Destination:

- A member of your family takes the bus to work everyday. Is it necessary for that person to bring his or her identity card?
- To register your child in a daycare center you must present a birth certificate. What should you do?

Prize:

- You have earned the applause of everyone present.
- You have won three smiles and a hug from the person you choose.

3. THE “HEALTH SECTION” OF THE GAME BOARD

This section of the board- whose goal is to discuss and review the corresponding group of minimum conditions corresponding to health- is illustrated with the institutions directly related to this support pillar: namely, offices of primary health care and the hospital.
Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

**Knowledge:**
- Is your family registered in the health system?
- Do the children 6 years old or younger in your family have regular health check-ups?
- Do you know anyone with a disability who receives medical treatment?
- Do you know how to care for a family member who is sick?

**Destination (D):**
- Your child had an appointment for a health check-up at 8:00. You overslept and missed the appointment. What should you do?
- You were invited to a meeting about the prevention of winter illnesses, but you cannot go. What should you do to get the information?
- A friend asks you what health check-ups are needed by a woman over 35 years old. What would you tell her?

**Prize (P):**
- You deserve a kiss from every person in your family present.
- You've won a hug from your family support counselor.

4. **THE “EDUCATION” SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD**

This section of the board includes a daycare center, a school, and the Municipal Education Department. The goal is to highlight the necessity of education for preschoolers, children, adolescents and young adults, especially in relation to the decision to complete their studies instead dropping-out in order to work. In addition, the information stresses the importance of family support in the education of children.

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

**Knowledge:**
- Do you need to pay fees to your child's school?
- Do you think that children should finish their primary and secondary education? Why or why not?
- What do you think about the education that your children receive in school?
- What activities does your child’s school invite you to? What activities do you attend?

**Destination:**
- There is a parents' meeting today, but you cannot go because you have to work. What should you do?
- A child in your family must repeat a grade and now does not want to study. What advice would you give him/her and who would you ask for help?
You must work and don’ t have anyone to care for your children. What would you do?
An adult in your family did not finish school. How could they complete their studies?

Prize:
- You have won a meal prepared by your family.

5. THE “FAMILY DYNAMICS” SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD

This board illustrates everyday family relationships, along with the institutions and organizations that directly support them. The goal is to facilitate an open dialogue about concerns of daily family life, and the quality of relationships between the members and with others.

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

Destination:
- A child in your family has been put in foster care. What could your family do to maintain contact with that child?
- Your neighborhood is organizing itself to work together for a specific purpose and they have invited you to participate. What would you tell them and why?
- Lately, you and your spouse have been having problems. What could you do to improve the situation?
- You are worried about the formation of your children, and cannot control them like before. What would worry you most about this situation?

Prize:
- Each member of your family must tell you what they like most about you.
- You’ve earned time just for yourself.
- You’ve earned a happy memory. Close your eyes and remember a special moment.

6. THE “HOUSING CONDITIONS” SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD

This board shows three paths, related to housing conditions, property conditions, and application for their own house, all leading to the image of a home. The first path is “Legal Property Documents”, the next, “Quality of Life” and the last, “Home Ownership”. The principal objective of this board is to facilitate the work which must be completed to improve the family’s housing conditions and the quality of life of its members. In the center of the board is a drawing of a house, in addition to the institutions related to this category:

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:
**The Bridge—between a family and its rights**

**Knowledge:**

- Who is the owner of your land and your house?
- If you had to organize the documents for your land and house, what would you need to do?
- If you wanted to apply for your own house, what procedures would you follow?

**Destination:**

- The weather has been very bad and you are having problems with your house. What would you need to fix and how would you do it?
- Your house feels small and everyone needs a place for their belongings. Think of some alternatives to resolve this situation.
- You have had problems paying your water and electricity bills. What would you do to resolve this problem and balance your account with the company?
- You want to make your house more beautiful. How would you like your house to look and what could you do to make this happen?

**Prize:**

- Each member of your family will organize their belongings and eliminate the things they never use, so that things are better.
- You’ve won a hug from your family support counselor.

7. **THE “EMPLOYMENT” SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD**

Organizations directly related to “EMPLOYMENT” are shown here. In the center is the Municipal Employment Information Office, a communal office which provides information related to unemployment and the options for occupational capacity-building. The principal objective of this section is to examine and reflect on the employability of the adult members of the family, the occupational insertion of those who are unemployed, and the working conditions of those who are employed.

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

**Knowledge:**

- Who in your family has a job and what do they do?
- Who in your family is satisfied with their job?
- Someone in your family is unemployed. What should the family do?

**Destination:**

- A child in your family worked over the summer, and now wants to work instead of going to school. What would you tell him or her and why?
- The Municipality has called to offer you an opportunity for occupational capacity-building. What would you tell them and why?
- Someone in your family is unemployed and has been offered a job outside of the city. What advice would you give him/her and why?
• A prospective employer calls you for an appointment tomorrow, but you don’t have money for transportation. What do you do?

Prize:

• You have won the opportunity to ask someone in your family to do you a favor.

8. THE “EMPLOYMENT” SECTION OF THE GAME BOARD

Illustrates the institutions and services that are directly related to the category of income: the Municipality, the bank, the Institute for the Normalization of Social Security, a bill payment center, a shoe repair shop, and the market. The principal objective of this section is to examine the family’s income and expenses, while at the same time reflecting on how to better manage the limited income and taking actions to increase it.

Examples of the game cards corresponding to this section are the following:

Knowledge:

• Which members of your family contribute money to the household?
• Which person is in charge of managing the money?
• If no one in your family receives a family subsidy or pension, do you know how to complete the process to receive them?
• Among the family’s expenses, which most concern you?

Destination:

• You have just enough money to cover the family’s expenses, but you are then asked to participate in a school raffle. What do you do?
• You have the opportunity to begin a small business, but you don’t have the initial money to start it. How do you work it out?
• The market offers to sell you merchandise on credit. You accept, although you also owe the bakery and the vegetable shop. How do you work this out?
• You receive a bonus payment from your job, and you have many possible ways to spend it. What would you decide spend it on?
• Your job is to organize a family budget.

Prize:

• You’ve won a flower drawn by your family support counselor.
VI. Construction Phases of The Bridge

In order to support the families in the construction of their bridge, the program has designed a 24-month intervention process consisting of two phases:

PHASE ONE- INTENSIVE WORK:

The initial six or eight months is a period of intensive work involving the family support counselor and the participating family. The first two months consist of weekly direct contact with the family, for a total of eight sessions; the third and fourth month consist of personal contact every 15 days, for a total of four sessions; and the final two months consist of monthly contact, adding two more sessions. Therefore, this phase of the intervention should normally include 14 work sessions between the family support counselor and the participating family, during which time it is hoped that the goals are successfully completed and the positive effects of the “psychosocial support to the family” are apparent. It is important to note that the duration of this phase of the intervention may be diminished if the objectives are achieved quickly, or it may be prolonged if more time is required.

All sessions are structured following the same methodology, only changing with respect to the central theme. In these sessions, one or more of the “support pillar” categories should be worked on at a rate corresponding to the motivation of the family and the progress made in completing the commitments of previous contracts. If other members of the family are present at the time of the work session, it is appropriate to invite them to participate in the activities together with the family representative.

The First Session: Should we work together to build a bridge?
The purpose of this session is to invite the family to become a part of the program. Their decision to accept or decline this invitation is completely autonomous. A support counselor is assigned to the family by the local Family Intervention Unit and is provided with the available documents describing the family and its situation. Before the first visit occurs, the support counselor reviews these documents and prepares the Program’s invitation that will be presented to the family. This preparatory work helps the support counselor to determine the specific work categories especially needed by the family.

The Second Session: Getting to know the family “Who we are…”
The second session only takes place with families who have accepted the invitation to participate in the program. The purpose of this session is to learn about the family’s composition and the main characteristics of each member from the perspective of the family representative. If one or more family members, aside from the representative, are present when the session takes place it is appropriate to invite them to participate.

The Third Session: The support pillars of the family’s life “prioritizing our concerns”
The objective of this session is to discuss the family’s main concerns and to complete an exercise to prioritize them, in order to successfully face these challenges and visualize alternatives.
The Fourth Session: *Family Capital “Organizing the storage shed”*  
The main purpose of this session is for the family to recognize its assets and understand how they can be used as a foundation to build concrete solutions to the problems they face.

Sessions 5 to 12: “WORKING WITH THE FAMILY TO BUILD THE BRIDGE”  
Beginning with the fifth session and continuing until the twelfth session, the intervention’s main objective is to carefully examine the seven support pillars of the family’s life. Work must be done on each topic to examine the presence or absence of the minimum conditions, this includes the signing of work contracts that define the process for achieving the minimum conditions presently absent in the family’s life.

Session 13: “COMPLETING THE BRIDGE”  
The main objective of this session is to review the achievements of the cooperative work process and prepare for the conclusion of this intensive work phase.

By this point the family should have completed building the bridge and have the letters of PUENTE painted up to the N, or be close to this level. This means that they have completed their commitments in the series of contracts and have significantly advanced towards achieving the minimum conditions of an acceptable quality of life set by the Program in each category.

Session 14: “USING THE BRIDGE”  
This is the last part of the intensive work phase, and is therefore ties together the achievements of previous sessions.

As a conclusion, the family should sign a final contract committing themselves to continue to work towards improving its living conditions and quality of life on its own, using the local network that it has activated as needed.

**PHASE TWO- ACCOMPANIMENT, MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP:**

The objective of this phase is to follow-up the completion of the tasks in the families' final contracts that were signed upon the conclusion of phase one. At the same time, the accompaniment aspect assures that contact is maintained between the family and its support counselor, who has worked with the family as part of the local network available to them as a result of participation in the program.

The accompaniment, monitoring and follow-up take place in the family’s home during an 16 to 18 month period (depending on the duration of the initial phase) with a diminishing frequency of contact. To complete the goals of this phase, the family support counselor is given a follow-up file called THE FAMILY CONTRACT MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP DOCUMENT which contains the final set of commitments made by the family.
The Bridge - between a family and its rights