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The Chambers D&I Latin America Report 2022: Breaking New Ground

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Case Study: Above and beyond: providing pro bono mental health support



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We signed a framework cooperation agreement in early 2022. During the pro bono client intake process, we noticed that many clients could benefit from a psychological evaluation and/or counselling. This was particularly true for clients who are victims of violence and abuse.

We reached out to the Association of Psychologists of La Paz to test a pilot program involving the exchange of services. PPO provides pro bono legal services to the Association and, in return, the Association provides low-cost or no-cost counselling and evaluation services to clients of PPO's pro bono program.

The aim of the initiative is to offer our pro bono clients a more comprehensive service; a service that is not limited to assisting with legal matters, but that also helps clients address mental health. By offering pro bono clients the possibility to access low-cost or no-cost psychological counselling services through our pro bono program,

we can more fully address our clients' needs. Addressing clients' needs from a comprehensive perspective is something we strive to do in all areas of practice. Pro bono is no different.

We have worked to establish clear processes for referring clients to the Association, and for tracking the time invested by each side of the collaboration to make sure that each party feels that it is contributing equally to the partnership. We are currently working to expand the program to other cities, so that it is not limited to La Paz.

This collaboration has generated more awareness in Bolivia about pro bono services. We are proud that we have recruited other professionals, in this case, psychologists, to broaden the scope of our pro bono program. In this spirit, we have also recruited other types of professionals, such as notaries, who have also opted to contribute to the program by donating their services.

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Individual Profile: Advancing women-owned business



Danica Yaksic, Senior Associate, PPO Abogados

Cámara de Mujeres Empresarias de Bolivia (CAMEBOL) was launched in March 2021. There are many business associations in Bolivia, but women are not well represented in their leadership, which means that their opinions are not considered in decision-making. Based on this reality, we decided to form a business association led by women. I was involved in drafting the bylaws and rules of the association, which we then worked to have approved by the Departmental Government of Cochabamba, officially recognizing CAMEBOL.

CAMEBOL seeks to promote the competitiveness, innovation and growth of women-owned and women-led businesses. In addition, it seeks to develop leadership and business development skills in its associates, create networks to generate business opportunities and exchange experiences and know-how, and, in general, to support and inspire women business leaders and entrepreneurs. Finally, by proposing new ideas and business models, CAMEBOL seeks to generate

consciousness regarding gender equality that will spur change in established social and economic paradigms in Bolivia.

To join CAMEBOL, the businesses must be formally established. This has been a challenge as, in many cases, entrepreneurs resist formalizing their businesses due to concerns that doing so will result in overly burdensome social benefits and tax obligations. For this reason, CAMEBOL is working to educate entrepreneurs on the benefits of formalizing a business, such as gaining access to financing from banking institutions and international organizations.

After just one year, CAMEBOL has over 55 members. The model is being replicated in other cities in Bolivia, and we are now working to form a national Chamber of Women Business Leaders, comprised of the local groups. This will help to create consciousness regarding gender equality and the power and potential of women-led businesses at the national level.

“By proposing new ideas and business models, CAMEBOL seeks to generate consciousness regarding gender equality that will spur change.”