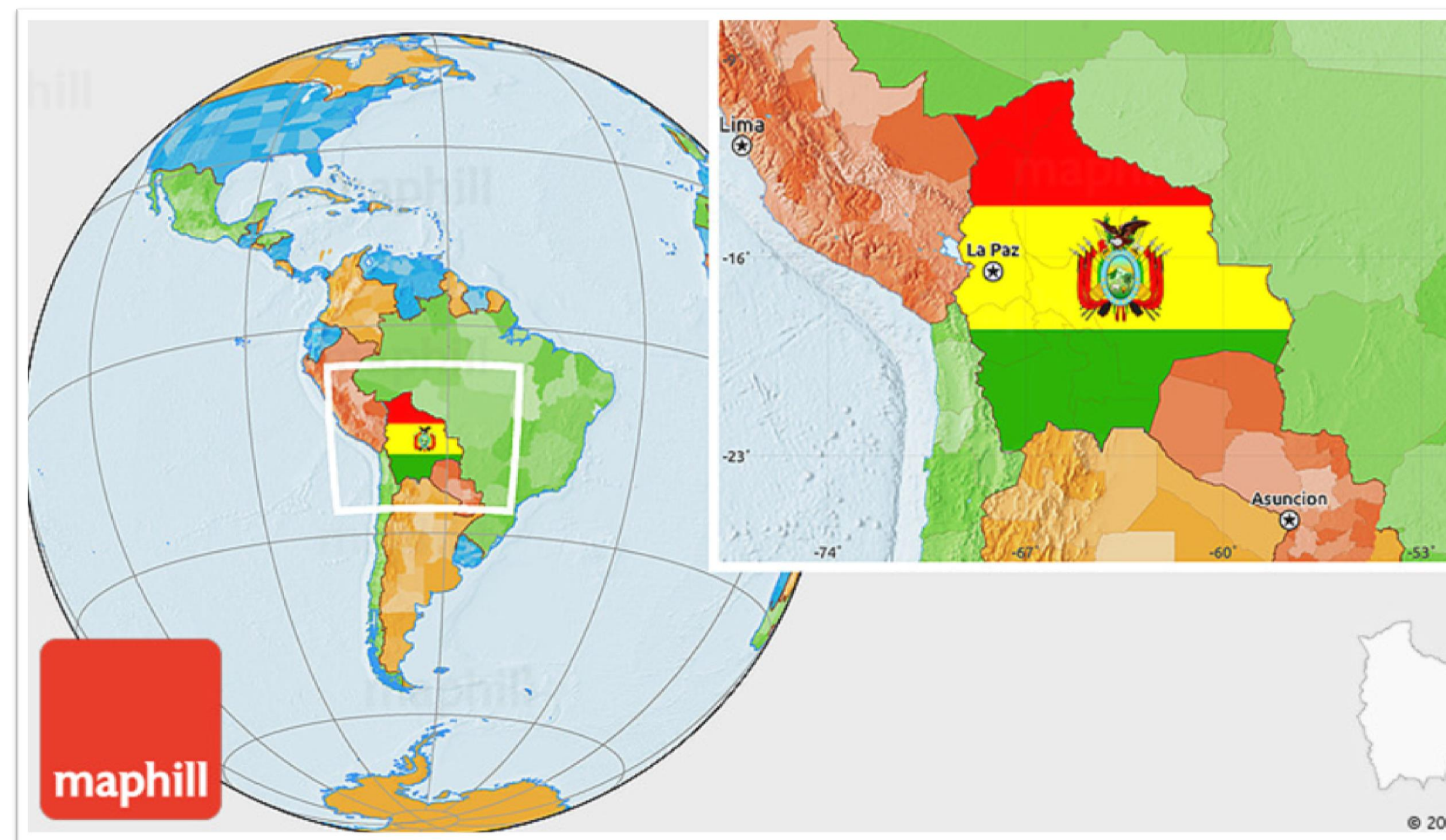


# Interdisciplinary Global Health Internship: Diabetes in Bolivia

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## Location: Cochabamba, Bolivia

- Landlocked country located in central South America
- Ecologically diverse due to its varied landscapes and climates – ranging from tropical forest to arid mountain regions
- 424,163 square miles in area, which is relatively large for having a population of only 10.5 million
- Spanish is the main language, though indigenous languages Quechua and Aymara are also common

## Advice

- Have fun and work hard, but take care of yourself in the same ways you do at home
- Limit your expectations and planning so you're open to whatever comes your way
- Talk to community members as much as possible. Listen and learn.

## Acknowledgments

Special thanks to SSW Office of Global Activities, SSW Board of Governors, Direct Relief, and El Centro Vivir con Diabetes.

## Project

The Interdisciplinary Global Health Internship was organized by U.S. based non-profit Direct Relief and various graduate schools from the U of M. The 4 person team consisted of graduate students in public policy, public health and social work to serve in a “consultant-like” capacity to El Centro Vivir con Diabetes, one of the only clinics in Bolivia specializing in diabetic care.

## Community Partner

El Centro Vivir con Diabetes (CVCD) is a non-profit diabetes clinic, located in Cochabamba, Bolivia. CVCD strives to prevent diabetes on a community level through education, and assist all individuals in treating and managing their diabetes, regardless of their socioeconomic status. In addition to clinical services, CVCD regularly hosts community wide outreach and education events to raise awareness about diabetes and existing treatment options.



## Outcomes

Over the course of the 10-week internship, our team worked with clinic staff to identify areas of need or improvement at CVCD. Team members then developed projects based on the clinic's needs that aligned with their experience and interest, including:

- Development of educational presentation for clinic lobby
- Food access mapping
- Grant writing
- Clinical data analysis
- Program evaluation
- Patient satisfaction survey
- Diabetic knowledge survey
- Technology training

## Skills Utilized & Developed

This experience allowed me to develop a variety of new skills and perspectives, including:

- An appreciation for the importance of working across disciplines to promote positive social change
- The role of social workers in a global context
- Increased understanding of “cultural humility” and “cultural competence” for social workers
- Improved Spanish speaking abilities

## Lessons Learned

Building relationships takes time, but it is probably the most important thing you can do for your self and the agency



## Connections

Classroom:

- *SW 699, Social Work Practice in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention:* Developed my understanding of how social workers can promote positive health outcomes and consider how this was being done at CVCD.
- *SW 748, Issues in Global Social Work Practice Re-Entry and Professional Practice:* Helped me reflect on my experience and understand the its connections to my education, career and the social work profession.

Career:

- This experience affirmed for me that throughout my career, I want to continue to work with colleagues from different fields. Inter-disciplinary work helped me understand better gaps in my knowledge, strengths in my knowledge base and how fields can work together to make the biggest impact on social issues.