



EPES

EDUCACIÓN POPULAR EN SALUD
POPULAR EDUCATION FOR HEALTH

the **Overview**

EPES was founded in 1982 during the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet as a health training project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile. Inspired by a vision of quality and fairness in health care for the poor, it offered training, guidance, and support for community health groups. Over the past twenty years, EPES has grown from a small, emergency-response team to a leader of systematic community mobilizations to improve health services and awareness.



20 Years Educating and Empowering Women and their Children, Changing Lives, and Building Healthier Communities

the Mission

EPES is dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of shantytown inhabitants through the training and organized participation of the residents themselves. A staff of twenty health professionals and administrative personnel works in two centers, Santiago and Concepción.



Steps Toward Sustainability

The shortage of sustainable, people-centered health institutions in poor communities is well documented. Since its inception, EPES has strived to fulfill its commitment to remain a viable, permanent organization for community health promotion. Purchasing and renovating a building in Santiago in the late 1990s was a key step towards institution building. The EPES Center now serves as the headquarters for the organization, with a library, meeting rooms and a large conference room that can seat over one hundred people.

After almost two decades as a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile, EPES took another important step towards long-term sustainability. In 2002, it became an independent foundation, receiving its non-profit status from the government of Chile. Although the EPES Foundation maintains close links with the Lutheran Church, as a foundation it can operate with more autonomy and grow in accordance with the needs of the community. A Board of Directors comprised of academics, representatives from the Lutheran Church, and activists on health, human rights, environmental, and women's issues now directs its activities. The Board is led by Karen Anderson, a former Evangelical Lutheran Church of America missionary who founded and then directed EPES for close to two decades.

In January 2002, two hundred people – including 20 international guests – came to celebrate EPES' 20th anniversary and the birth of the EPES Foundation. The three-day event was marked by a seminar on health challenges for the new millennium.

Training Community Health Promoters

EPES trains local residents, mostly women, about illness and health; together, the health promoters study their own communities' needs and advocate for improvements. EPES' approach is unique in that the efforts of health professionals are combined with those of permanent teams of community health promoters. These teams diagnose and address the root causes of illness and fight for improved conditions and services.

The health promoter training program lasts one year and includes three stages: motivation and selection; training; and organizational consolidation. Participants learn how to diagnose and prioritize a community's health needs and how to put their new public health knowledge to work in their own communities. The emphasis is on confronting local health problems and the underlying conditions that cause them. Health teams develop their own work plans and operate autonomously. Through participation in a range of issue-based networks, EPES and its allies push for broad changes in social policy, especially at the local level.

Community Action for Health

During 2002, 100 health promoters belonging to 12 community health teams worked to promote public health in five large shantytowns in Santiago and Concepción. The issues they addressed included: acute respiratory infections, breast cancer, reproductive rights, domestic violence, adolescent sexuality, HIV infection and AIDS, mental health, and environmental pollution.

In 2002, EPES and the health teams touched the lives of over 187,000 women, men, and children in poor communities through educational and outreach activities.

Key Health Priorities & Examples of Actions

Comprehensive Approaches to HIV/AIDS

Early in the AIDS epidemic, EPES joined forces with churches, teachers, gay men, sex workers, women's and human rights organizations, and concerned individuals to respond to the expansion of HIV infection. Critical of the unrealistic prevention choices – the abstinence/monogamy/condom approach – offered to low-income women, EPES worked to develop community strategies that could respond to the conditions and vulnerabilities faced by these women that mass prevention campaigns did not address.

These actions included: diagnostic research done by the health promoters themselves; annual mass meetings on the issue first with women alone and later including men, along with health professionals and local authorities and leaders; linking the AIDS issue with family violence; and the formation of a multi-sectoral AIDS network.

Local women define their problems and are the main protagonists in the search for solutions. Their realities and needs determine the parameters of the solutions and not a pre-determined set of responses.



Women, Adolescents, & AIDS

EPES is dedicated to increasing the awareness of neighborhood residents of gender factors that affect the incidence of HIV infection among women, particularly adolescents. An example of this work is the Community Conversations on AIDS and Sexuality (JOCCSIDA), which is implemented jointly with the multi-sectoral AIDS network in El Bosque. The events sponsored by this project bring together hundreds of youth to stimulate discussion of sexuality and to refer them to available reproductive and sexual health services.

Reproductive Health, Domestic Violence & Public Policy

EPES empowers women and community organizations to influence public policy related to domestic violence, sexual health, and HIV/AIDS. Health promoters have led efforts to confront these issues by instituting long-term educational programs, cooperating closely with health services and local authorities, and directly aiding and supporting affected individuals.

For the second year, EPES awarded small grants to local groups to carry out community health projects in the area of sexual and reproductive health. Nine projects were supported in 2002 including grants given to mother's centers, community organizations and teachers groups. Through these projects, over 2000 people participated in workshops, video forums, and seminars on issues related to reproductive health.





EPES health promoters made their voice heard at the highest levels of government when EPES promoter Mónica Daza met with Chile's Health Minister to talk about shantytown health needs and specifically the need for mammogram equipment in poor communities.
November 2002



Environmental Health "Our Air, Our Water, Our Health"

EPES educates residents about environmental contaminants and trains them to use administrative, legal, and social resources for environmental protection. In 2002, the Concepción office of EPES organized an environmental health campaign that included a health survey of 100 residents, and a participatory community diagnosis with eight local groups to identify environmental health problems. The results were presented in a public assembly, represented in educational murals, and broadcast on a radio program.

Community Mental Health Issues

EPES has played a leadership role in the San Ramón Mental Health Network from its beginning in 1992. Since 1995, the Network has worked to increase sexual and domestic violence awareness and collaborate with local authorities to provide prevention services. The results of a 2000 EPES research study on the prevalence of sexual and domestic violence in San Ramón, along with activities of the Network, led local authorities to recognize and include domestic violence as a priority in the community. Currently, EPES is working with the network of public services to create a local referral system for victims of violence.

Women's Health Issues & Common Ailments

As the second cause of death in women 25 and older, breast cancer is a critical health problem in Chile. In 2002, six health groups promoted breast cancer awareness in southern Santiago with distribution of 8,000 pamphlets, street exhibits reaching hundreds of local women, and educational workshops. A petition signed by more than 1,000 local residents will be presented to the mayor asking for the installation of mammogram equipment in the hospital.

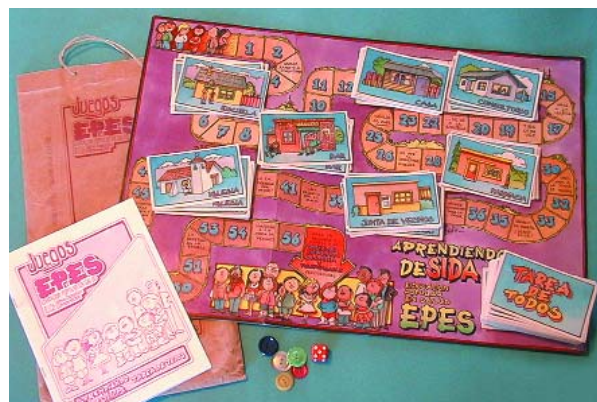


EPES Educational Materials

EPES develops and distributes educational games and materials for use by community health promoters, churches, and grassroots organizations. The games are designed to make learning fun, and playing them collectively helps groups consider possible responses while gaining new knowledge. EPES loans or sells ten board games on topics such as respiratory infections, alcoholism, mental health, first aid, and HIV/AIDS. It also offers health brochures, manuals, and other bibliographic and audiovisual materials.

EPES games have been distributed to grassroots organizations and institutions in more than 30 countries.

At the end of the 1990s, EPES began publishing a series of booklets on the methodologies it had developed and the lessons learned after years of mobilizing communities for health. These include papers on community health promotion, participation, network formation, sexual and domestic violence, and sexuality workshops. In addition, the board game "Learning about AIDS" was produced in English.



South-South Training Initiative Expands Work to Argentina



Photo Left: Women play the EPES "Learning About AIDS" game, distributed in more than 30 countries.

Photo Right: Participants and EPES educators during the health promoter training course in Resistencia, Argentina.



In 2002, EPES inaugurated a model of South-South technology transfer in a challenging environment in neighboring Argentina. Mónica Maldonado, a long-time health promoter and now EPES trainer, and EPES staffers María Eugenia Calvin and Lautaro López, carried out an intensive, four-month training program in conjunction with the María Magdalena Mission of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in the city of Resistencia, Chaco province, Argentina. The program included the training of 26 local health promoters; a diagnostic survey of health needs; workshops on sexual health and environmental health; and the formation of a permanent health advocacy group to promote proposals with local authorities and to educate neighbors on health problems.

In 2003, members of the Argentine staff will come to Chile for more intensive training with EPES, and Monica will return to Resistencia to help the new health team consolidate itself.

Training for Students & Health Professionals

EPES provides training on participatory education methodologies and community participation for professional workers at public clinics. It also leads workshops and educational seminars for public health professionals on domestic violence, reproductive and sexual health issues, and HIV/AIDS and women.

EPES is a professional placement for social work and sociology interns from several Chilean universities and regularly receives graduate and undergraduate students from the United States and Canada.

"EPES no longer belongs only to the Lutheran Church in Chile. It is now the property of everyone, even people outside our national boundaries. EPES belongs to all those who believe in the life of dignity, the life of plenty."

- Reflection of EPES Board Member, Rev. Oscar Sanhueza, after participating in the graduation ceremony in Resistencia, Argentina, December 2002.

Quality of Program & Recent Examples of Local

"In a world characterized by violence, injustice, poverty, and neglect, EPES has been a wonderful example of how churches can offer an answer by equipping and strengthening communities to free themselves from these evils and find their way into a fuller and more abundant life for all."

*Dr. Konrad Raiser,
Secretary General, World
Council of Churches in a
letter to EPES on its
20th anniversary, 2002.*



EPES has provided training and technical assistance to projects both in Chile and throughout the region, including Bolivia, Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Uruguay.

Dr. Julia Paley documented her work with the EPES-trained Llaretta health team in the award-winning book, *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile*, published by the University of California Press in 2001. Julia was awarded the 2001 American Ethnological Society's Sharon Stephen prize for this book.

EPES training methods and materials have received international recognition for innovation and effectiveness. EPES educational games and materials are used by programs throughout the world. In 2000, the EPES AIDS game was distributed by the World Council of Churches to over 200 organizations at the World AIDS Congress in South Africa.

In 2001, Llaretta health promoters joined Dr. Paley on a U.S. speaking tour to discuss the book and their work as community health promoters. The tour included presentations at the Latin American Studies Association annual conference in Washington, D.C., presentations at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and at the Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts.

For four years, EPES participated on the international editorial team of CONTACT, the health journal of the World Council of Churches, until it was scaled back due to financial difficulties. EPES continues to produce CONTACT in Spanish and distributes it to more than 1,000 churches and health organizations in Latin America.



EPES Educational Director, Maria Eugenia Calvin's article, *Gender, Mental Health and Violence*, was included in a series of documents published by the Ministry of Health and The Panamerican Health Organization in 2002.

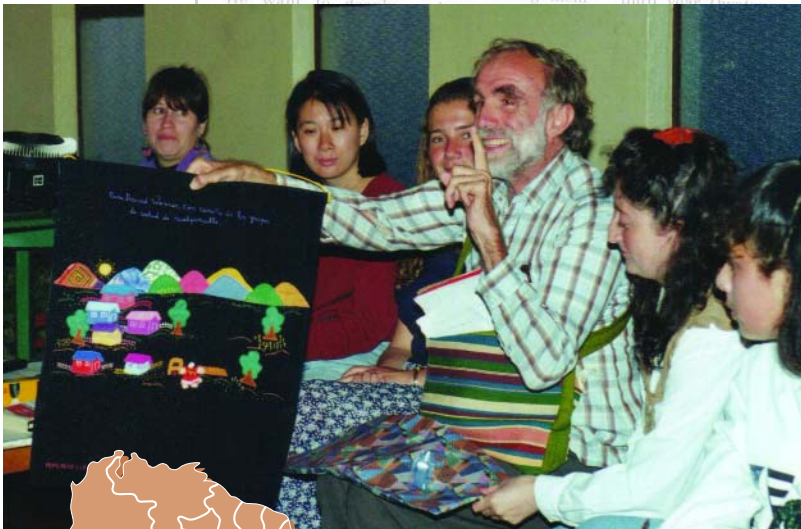
Educational tools developed and used in EPES' local breast cancer education campaign were adopted with permission and used by the National Cancer Corporation in 2001 in its national campaign on the importance of self-examinations for women.

Photojournalist Connie Bickman's 2001 book, *Tribes of Women* included photos and writing about the work of EPES in the chapter, "Shantytown Women." New World Library, California. (The book is available at bookstores throughout the U.S.)



EPES IN THE NEWS!

& International Recognition



"I have visited scores of community-based health and development programs around the world and surely EPES is one of the most outstanding. It has been ground-breaking in many areas: organizing people to resolve the underlying causes of poor health, in women's rights and health, and in empowering persons with HIV/AIDS to make the most of their abilities and lives.

The method and materials developed by EPES have been used throughout Latin America and beyond, as models for a people-centered approach to primary health care and community development."

David Werner, author of "Where There is No Doctor"



Photo Left: Rrasario Castillo and Karen Anderson present EPES in New York.
Photo Above: David Werner presents at EPES Concepción.

Thank You!



We want to thank all of you for your commitment to Cents for Santiago. Your money helps poor communities to improve health and living conditions.

*Muchas Gracias!
EPES Team
Santiago, Chile*




Peter & Bethany Yarrow Benefit Concert for EPES

Saturday
October 31, 1998
7:30 pm
Owatonna High School Auditorium

General Admission: \$10 advanced • \$15 at the door

General Admission



Go to the People
Live with them,
Learn from them,
Love them.
Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.
But with the best leaders
When the work is done
the task accomplished
The people will say,
"We have done this
Ourselves."
Lao Tsu, China, 700 B.C.

In 1993, EPES received the "Award for Service in International Health by an Organization" by the Washington-based National Council for International Health (NCIH).

the People



Front (l-r): Rosario Castillo (Executive Director), Karen Anderson and Fabiola Letelier. **Back** (l-r): Rev. Oscar Sanhueza, Rosa Quintanilla and Ricardo Barra. **Not shown:** David Molineaux and Dennise Araya.

Funding Sources

We are grateful to the agencies, foundations, churches, and friends who have so generously supported our work for the past twenty years. We could not do this work without their support and collaboration. As we look to the challenges of the future, we hope for continued support of the EPES Foundation as we seek to build healthier lives and communities.

Current Agencies & Supporting Congregations

Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
Global Health Ministries (GHM)
CAFOD
Ford Foundation
International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC)
Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church
Church World Service
St. Peter's Lutheran Church, North Plainsfield, NJ
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Clifton Park, NY
Trinity Lutheran Church, Owatonna, MN



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EPES Concepción

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Board of Directors

President and Founder: Karen Anderson, MEd, MPH.

Karen led EPES through its first two decades until returning to the U.S. in 2000.

Vice President: David Molineaux, Theologian. A former editor of Latinamerica Press in Perú, author of several books on ecology.

Secretary: Dennise Araya, Teacher and Director of Raíces ("Roots"), a project working with vulnerable children and adolescents in Santiago.

Treasurer: Ricardo Barra, Biochemist, PhD, Director of the Environmental Science Department of the University of Concepción, Chile.

Oscar Sanhueza, Pastor, Talcahuano, Chile, member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chile Synod Council.

Rosa Quintanilla González, Educator, elected community leader, and former Health Promoter. Author of the book, "I am a Shantytown Woman."

Fabiola Letelier, distinguished lawyer and human rights figure in Chile, Ms. Letelier is a former President of the Chilean human rights group CODEPU.

Executive Committee

Rosario Castillo, Executive Director of the Foundation.

Maria Eugenia Calvin, Social Worker and Health Educator.
Director of Education and Planning for EPES.

Sonia Covarrubias, Social Worker and Health Educator.

Lautaro López, M.D., Director of Concepción branch office.

Virginia Norambuena, Sociologist, Historian and Health Educator, Concepción office.

Educational & Administrative Teams

SANTIAGO

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Judith Bresler, Social Worker, Health Educator

Paulina Cid, Sociologist, Health Educator

Liliana Estrada, Occupational Therapist, Health Educator

Maria Teresa Fuentealba, Secretary

Jorge Olivares, Librarian

Héctor Reyes, Office Manager

Maria Stella Toro, Historian, Health Educator

Claudia Ulloa, Psychologist, Health Educator

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Maritza Provoste, Administrative Assistant

Javier Sandoval, Teacher, Health Educator

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