

Table: Promotora-researchers' contributions during the life cycles of each project

Project Name ¹	Stage of Research Project with Promotora-Researcher Engagement							
	<i>Conceptualization</i>	<i>Pre-planning²</i>	<i>Pre-testing</i>	<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Collecting data</i>	<i>Data processing²</i>	<i>Data analysis and interpretation</i>	<i>Dissemination of findings</i>
POP (Project)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HBFG Project		X		X	X			
HFI Project		X	X	X	X			X
MFV Project	X	X	X	X	X			X
PDPE Project		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C-HCFRA Project	X	X		X	X			X
<i>Pulga</i> Project	X	X	X	X	X			X

1. Project abbreviations are as follows: POP=Participant Observation Project, HBFG=Healthy Brain Focus Group, HFI=Household Food Inventory, MFV=Mobile Food Vendor, PDPE=Participant-Driven Photo-Elicitation, C-HCFRA=*Colonia*- Household and Community Food Resource Assessment

2. This stage included planning study activities (e.g., determining responsibilities, timing of activities, identifying training needs and needed materials and levels of support, etc.), developing study protocols and data collection instruments, and training sessions.

3. This stage included data entry for surveys, and transcription and translation of observational field notes and audio files.

Table: *Promotora*-researchers observational insights as researchers

<i>Promotora</i>-researcher insight	Example
Dietary decision making	<i>Promotora</i> -researchers' observations that <i>pulgas</i> were an important source of food to <i>colonia</i> residents (made during a debriefing interview) provided critical insight and a springboard for future projects.
Patterns	Observers noticed the use of corn <i>tortillas</i> as utensils during meals, which affect the composition and content of meals. Observation highlighted the importance of understanding dietary patterns in a way that uncovered the taken for granted aspects of food/meal acquisition, preparation, and consumption.
Cultural practices	<i>Promotora</i> -researchers emphasized how much they learned from the mothers' shared home remedies using plants and herbs they photographed and talked about prayers, teas, balms, and rituals to help with stress, illness, and fear. This observation signaled that the mothers' practices may have not been as common as we may have once believed.
Meanings	<i>Promotora</i> -researchers emphasized the labor of love and the "super" mothers who participated in the PDPE project. They explained that the mothers did everything for their families because they loved them their children, and this meaning behind food choices was applicable to mothers making multiple dishes for each family member at one meal, preparing labor-intensive traditional dishes, and waking up early in the morning to make homemade <i>tortillas</i> to make breakfast for their families.
Family coping strategies	An example of this was one mom who cooked specials meals and went "all-out" for her son who she was trying to keep out of a gang. By spending time with her son and cooking the foods he liked, the mother felt she could keep her son at home and closer to her so that he would not be off roaming around with the wrong crowd. This insight showed us a whole new perspective on a family's eating habits. In this case, it was to keep a son out of a gang.
Nutrition knowledge	<i>Promotora</i> -researchers shared several examples of how much mothers knew about fruits and vegetables, which ones had different benefits, how to pick/select them, and various preparation methods; they were impressed with the new ways that mothers were incorporating vegetables into dishes for their families, and the <i>promotora</i> -researchers wanted to learn how to make similar healthy dishes for their families.
Beliefs	The <i>promotora</i> -researchers shared that for <i>colonia</i> families, "Family is everything," which greatly influences the way in which we now conduct research. For example, this has influenced research design to include the whole family, and to have data collection interfere or compete with family time.
Environmental knowledge	This included knowledge of the physical locations of <i>colonias</i> and how that played a role in conducting projects, such as what areas to avoid, areas where certain target audiences live (for example, elderly populations, young families, etc.), and so forth.

Table: Promotora-researchers actions and outcomes

Observation	Action taken	Outcome
<p>Promotora-researchers observed many families lacked adequate clothing and shoes for summer and winter seasons. Families had also solicited <i>promotora</i>-researchers and asked if the research program could assist with clothing donations.</p>	<p>Project team starting collecting gently used/new clothing in Bryan/College Station and delivering it to South Texas on research trips for <i>promotora</i>-researchers to coordinate distribution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families in different <i>colonias</i> were given gently used/new clothing and shoes. - This donation is ongoing and happens two-four times a year.
<p>During the holiday season, <i>promotora</i>-researchers noticed participant families were not able to provide children with Christmas presents.</p>	<p><i>Promotoras</i> identified areas with most need (each year a new area is selected).</p> <p><i>Promotoras</i> identified families with children who were least likely to receive any gifts, provided children's age gender, and children's wish list items (e.g., usually clothes, shoes, jackets), to research team, and worked tirelessly coordinating the Christmas party where gifts are personally delivered to each family.</p> <p><i>Promotoras</i> personally delivered party invitations to families and pictures with Santa post-event.</p>	<p>Annual Christmas event: "Christmas in the Colonias"</p> <p>2009 (<i>San Carlos/Alton</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 53 children received Christmas gifts - 19 mothers received gift bags - 8 families received grocery gift cards <p>2010 (<i>Progreso</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 120 children received Christmas gifts - 30 mothers received gift bags <p>2011 (<i>Peñitas</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75 children received Christmas gifts - 21 families received food boxes - 20 boxes of men's, women's and children's clothing and shoes distributed
<p>During the summer, <i>promotora</i>-researchers noticed that mothers were concerned about not having the resources to get their children ready for school, in terms of school supplies, uniforms, and shoes.</p>	<p><i>Promotora</i>-researcher team came up with Spanish name for project: "<i>Preparando a los niños para tener éxito en la escuela</i>"</p> <p>They identified families with children needing assistance with preparing children for school. Provided children's ages and genders to research team and worked to coordinate a multi-day event where "backpacks" were delivered to children.</p> <p>Also, they Identified need for portable fans to help provide comfort during the hot weather.</p>	<p>Annual Back-to-School event: "Back-to-School Promotion"</p> <p>2010 (<i>San Carlos/Alton</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 68 children received, school supplies, backpacks, and a \$20 Wal-Mart gift cards - 21 fans delivered to <i>colonia</i> homes <p>2011 (<i>Peñitas/Progreso</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 110 children received, school supplies, backpacks, and a \$20 Wal-Mart gift cards - 35 fans delivered to <i>colonia</i> homes
<p><i>Promotora</i>-researchers noticed kids had trouble focusing during research projects due to hunger.</p>	<p><i>Promotora</i>-researchers came up with the idea of emergency food boxes.</p>	<p>Many boxes regularly delivered to families beginning in 2011.</p>
<p><i>Promotora</i>-researchers noticed some families homes were cold and in need of heaters.</p>	<p><i>Promotora</i>-researchers asked PI to provide space heaters for cold homes.</p>	<p>3 heaters delivered to families.</p>
<p>Local community partner was hosting a back to school fair and needed school supplies.</p>	<p><i>Promotora</i>-researchers acquired pencil boxes and supplies for distribution.</p>	<p>25 pencil boxes with complete supplies delivered to Progreso Community Center for distribution.</p>
<p>Donation requested from ARISE (local community agency providing colonia residents with social services).</p>	<p><i>Promotora</i>-research team requested that we partner with ARISE in their community Thanksgiving meal event.</p>	<p>\$50 HEB gift card donated to ARISE.</p>

Figure 1: *Promotora*-Researcher Studies

