El Escobal de Tulú, Coclé

Travis Bumgarner

Community Analysis

Environmental Health - Group 73

Peace Corps Panama

November 20, 2013

**Introduction**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to lay the foundation for the remainder of the volunteer´s service. First it introduces the original goals of the Peace Corps environmental health program in the community. From there, the community and its aspects such as population, economy, and geography are introduced. Baseline data collected throughout the community is presented to show where improvements can be made. Groups that can help with development come next. Finally, there is a list of challenges and a list of goals to work towards for the next trimester.

**Volunteer Activities envisioned by APCD**

Escobal does not currently have a functioning aqueduct serving the entire community. Out of 24 houses, only 9 are connected to the system servicing 37 of the 85 that live in this main section of the community. The tank is never full because the spring catchment allows for a lot fo escape of water and is in need of replacement. Their newly formed aqueduct committee needs to be trained on maintenance and management of the system and the land that the spring is on should be protected with a written agreement with the land owner.

General Environmental Health promotion and education needs to be done.

Community members have also shown interest in learning more about latrines.

**Goals and Indicators**

* HE-046 Trained Water Committees in Water and Sanitation Systems
* HE-047 Constructed or Improved Water and Sanitation Systems
* HE-052 Households Having a Hand Washing Station with Soap and Safe Water
* HE-057 People in Households Having Access to Clean, Safe Drinking Water
* HE-059 Trained to Build Latrines
* HE-060 Trained on Latrine Maintenance
* HE-062 Individuals in Households with Access to Latrines
* HE-063 People Using Functional Latrines

**Information Collection Techniques**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Who** | **What** |
| 27-9-13 | Bladimir Quirós | Community Leader Interview |
| 30-9-13 | Fermin del Rosario | Community Leader Interview |
| 1-10-13 | Gustavo Ibarra | Community Leader Interview |
| 2-10-13 | Alone | GPS Community Mapping |
| 4-10-13 | Alone | GPS Community Mapping |
| 8-10-13 | Alone | GPS Community Mapping |
| 14-10-13 | Fermin del Rosario | Community Leader Interview |
| 21-10-13 | Bladimir Quirós | GPS Community Mapping |
| 23-10-13 | Gustavo Ibarra | Limiar Tanque, Caminar Sistema |
| 2-11-13 | Gustavo Ibarra | Community Leader Interview |
| 5-11-13 | Gustavo Ibarra | Community Interviews. House numbers 15, 16, 14, 13, 12, 34, 7 |
| 9-11-13 | Familia Anfitriona | Looked over map and community member information |
| 15-11-13 | Fermin del Rosario | Community Leader Interview |
| 20-11-13 | Alone | Community Interviews. House numbers 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 |
| 21-11-13 | Alone | Community Interviews. House numbers 1, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 34 |
| 8-1-14 | Gustavo Ibarra | Community Leader Interview |
| 8-1-14 | Anabel | Centro de Salud Interview |
|  |  |  |

**Draft and Final Plan Sharing with Community**

The draft will be reviewed with various members of the community to ensure it is accurate and thorough. The final plan will be presented to the community members that were mainly involved in the project which are Gustavo Ibarra, Fermin del Rosario, and Bladimir Quirós. They will each possess a hard copy that the community will be aware about and can visit these members to read the report.

**Community Profile**

**General Information**

El Escobal is located in the corregimiento Tulú in the province of Coclé. It was founded about 100 years ago by the families Ibarra and Sedeño. 93 years ago the church was constructed within the community. This location was picked because of the wood and also because bellota grows here. Bellota is the plant that is used to make sombreros which is a common job in the community. The community’s name comes from the fact that the material used to make escobas grows here.

**Characteristics of the Community**

*Geography*

El Escobal is located in the middle of Cocle just north of La Pintada. It is situated in the mountains and has a cool climate. Water for ten other communities originates in the mountains of El Escobal and the only river that does not dry out during the rainy season, Santa Cruz, runs through the community.

*Transportation*

Chivas run about every 15 minutes from 4am to 7pm originating at Penonomé and La Pintada to the entrance of the community, La Cantera. The distance from La Cantera to the beginning of the community is about a twenty minute walk. In 2011 there was a restoration project performed on the road that runs through the community. As of the beginning of November 2013, a chiva has started running a route from La Cantera to the next community, El Limón.

*Population*

The population within the community tends to stay the same throughout the year. There are landowners that live in other parts of the country including Colon and Panama City. Some family members live in the city return home to visit infrequently. Below is a breakdown of the population.

*Economy*

Sombreros are the main source of income for the community. Sombrero weaving is an activity that both men and women partake in. It takes about a week for a sombrero to be created. Then a man who works in several communities will purchase the sombreros for sale in Penonomé and other places.

Farming is done for consumption or trade for other food and products within the community. The community mainly produces coffee, rice, corn, vegetables, and platino.

Several houses have family members who work outside of the community. Most, if not all of them live and work in Panama and return home to visit. They assist the families here in El Escobal by sending home money.

*Daily Sched****u****le*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Hombres | | | 5:30 - 6 | Despertarse | | 7:00 - 7:30 | Desayunar | | 7:30 - 12:00 | Hacer Sombreros, Trabajar en la finca, otro trabajo | | 12:00 - 1:00 | Almorzar | | 1:00 - 5:30 | EL mismo trabajo como la manaña | | 5:30- 6:00 | Bañarse | | 6:00 - 6:30 | Cenar | | 6:30 - 8:00/9:00 | Relejar | | 8:00/9:00 | Acostarse | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Mujeres | | | 5:30 – 6:00 | Despertarse | | 6:00 - 7:00 | Preparar desayuno, bañarse | | 7:00 - 7:30 | Desayunar | | 7:30 - 12:00 | Preparar almuerzo, trabajo de casa, hacer sombrero | | 12:00 - 1:00 | Almorzar | | 1:00 - 6:00 | Preparar cena, trabajo de casa, hacer sombrero | | 6:00 - 6:30 | Cenar | | 6:30 - 8:00/9:00 | Relejar | | 8:00/9:00 | Acostarse | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Niños | | | 6:00 - 7:00 | Despertarse | | 7:00 - 7:30 | Desayunar | | 7:30 - 2:00 | Ir a/salir de escuela, escuela | | 2:00 - 6:00 | Tarea, Relejar, Jugar | | 6:00 - 6:30 | Cenar | | 6:30 - 8:00/9:00 | Relejar | | 8:00/9:00 | Acostarse | |

*Yearly Calendar*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Enero** | **Febrero** | **Marzo** |
| 9) Día de Martires | (9-22: In Service Training) | Time to look for new fuentes |
| **Abril** | **Mayo** | **Junio** |
|  | (5-11: PML Seminar) | 15: Día del Niño |
|  | (21-23: Regional Meeting) | Tercer Domingo: Día de Padre |
|  |  | (14-18: One Year Medication) |
| **Julio** | **Agusto** | **Septiembre** |
| 19: Patronales en El Escobal | 30/8-9/9: Vacacinones Escolar | ?: Día de Campesino |
| 11-19: 9 Noches | 15: Fundación de Panamá la Vieja | 30/8-9/9: Vacaciones Escolar |
|  |  | (17-19: Regional Meeting) |
| **Octubre** | **Noviembre** | **Diciembre** |
| Mucha lluvia | Mucha lluvia | 8: Día de Madre |
| 12: Sombrero Festival | 3: Seperación de Colombia | 15-21: Patronales de Penonomé |
| 19: Aniversio de La Pintada | 4: Día de la Bandera | 24: Noche Buena |
|  | 6: Desfile de Penonomé | 25: Navidad |
|  | 10: Primer grito de Independencia | 31: Fiesta de fin de año |
|  | 28: Independencia de España |  |

(Key: Monthly Event, (2014 Event))

*Government Projects*

The Panamanian Government and a company from Spain have begun working on a project to install a wind farm within the community. Currently, forest has been cleared for roads and sensors have been installed to measure the wind. The roads are set to be paved in the next six to seven months and the project is expected to be completed in five to six years.

**Baseline Data**

*Water Info:*The community is separated into two water systems and committees, Arriba and Abajo.

The materials for the Abajo system were donated many years back and the members of the community constructed the system. It is regularly maintained and in good shape. The system provides water for 10 houses and 30 people. Funds are collected regularly and there is a land agreement with the dueños. Every household connected to the system reports generally great water. The only issues with the system is that those further down the water line are affected by pressure drops resulting from other houses opening their taps.

The Arriba system was constructed around the same time and with the same materials as the Abajo system. It is also regularly maintained and in good shape. The system provides water for 12 houses and 26 people. There are several issues with the system. Starting at the source, not all water is collected and seeps into the ground and around the collection point. Potentially, another source is needed to provide enough water for all of the houses. Through the piping of the system, due to the fact that the source and houses are highly elevated, elevation could potentially be an issue within the system. For those houses that are connected to the system, only very few houses close to the water tank receive good water. Further down the line most of the houses experience low quantity, low pressure, and sometimes no water. This problem is worse in the dry season when all houses experience water outages. There are seven houses, within close distance of the water system, that either have broken pipes or no pipes running to the house.

More in depth information can be seen in the appendix.

*Latrine Info:* Latrines are all improvised structures. There is no set design being applied. Materials range from surrounding structures of wood, plastic sheets, zinc, or no surrounding structure. At least some of the floors are not reinforced with rebar. Also, there are several households without latrines. The breakdown of the latrines is that there are at least 7 houses without latrines, 7 with latrines ranging in age from 0 to 4 years, and 1 an age of 11 years.

More in depth information can be seen in the appendix.

**Institutions and Programs**

**Comité de Agua de El Escobal Arriba**

The Comité de Agua de El Escobal Arriba consists of president Gustabo Ibarra, secretary Fermin Del Rosario, tesorero Doc Octaciano Ibarra, fiscal Fernando Cedeño, and vocales Ruben Ibarra and Omaira Lorenso. The directiva was originally part of Comité de Agua de El Escobal Abajo but separated in roughly August 2013. Funds are currently not being collected. Materials the comité currently possesses was given by an alcade. There is currently no persona juridica.

|

**Comité de Agua de El Escobal Abajo**

The Comité de Agua de El Escobal Abajo consists of the president Elia Guzmán, secretary Bladimir Quirós, tesorero Edis Samuel Guzmán, and fiscal Sixta E Ibarra. The directiva began on 17-12-2011. There is currently no persona juridica.

**Comisión Religiosa**

The Comisión Religiosa is the most active group within El Escobal. It is in charge of the church within El Escobal which is also the only public structure. The group is responsible for maintaining the structure, receiving ministers, and raising funds. The main fundraising method is through soup or other food sold on Sundays after church service. There is also an annual celebration that takes place within the church which is also used as a fundraiser. It is known as Novenas which is nine nights of food and activities within the church. The last day is the most important in which the Padre from the church in Penonome comes to perform baptisms, marriages, first communion, and other religious ceremonies. The president is currently Jose Gustavo Ibarra and the vice president is Miriam del Carmen.

**Red de Oportunidades**

The Red de Oportunidades is a small women´s group led by Bacilia Peñalosa. Its goal is to raise funds through sombrero making for various activities in the community. Currently the group is separated and needs to be reformed.

**Comite de Salud**

The health center is located in the neighboring community of Limón. It is almost 30 years old and serves the communities of Limón, Escobal, Pedrigosa, and Sumbador. The comité offers basic health services such vaccinations, assistance with basic illnesses, pregnancy, school programs, and blood pressure. There is a group, Farmacia La Salud, which comes once every two months to offer more in depth and other services. However, they do not do dentistry. Anabel, the woman in charge of the health center would like to work on trash collection, giving more attention to vaccinations, dentistry, and getting the solar panels running for the refrigerator so that the health center can stock more supplies and lights for security at night and so that when traveling doctors’ groups come they can work longer.

**Challenges and Opportunities**

**General**

There are mainly no conflicts between members or groups within the community. Land disputes over piping and water sources are not an issue. However, written agreements would be a proactive step to prevent future issues from arising. There is an issue with land owners who come to visit for a few days and throw parties and drain the water system. The larger concern is about groups from outside of the community. Currently, a wind farm is being constructed within the community that may cause land disputes later own over where the water system is placed. Written agreements would also be a useful step to combat this issue. Finally, there is a rumor spreading around that there is a company that bottles water is getting preferential treatment over water committees for sources. This could potentially have a large impact on El Escobal due to the richness of water sources within the community. Currently, water committees from several communities are meeting to discuss this issue.

**Potential Volunteer Contribution**

There are several areas that can be improved upon in the community. These are water, latrines, refrigerators, and the health center. To achieve improvements in each of these areas, goals are being set that will involve both the volunteer and the community. These goals can be seen in the first trimester tasks.

**Draft Volunteer Strategic Plan**

**See Appendix**

**Appendix**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **C:\Users\Travis Bumgarner\Google Drive\Peace Corps\First Three Months\System Pictures\IMG_0592.JPG** | **C:\Users\Travis Bumgarner\Google Drive\Peace Corps\First Three Months\System Pictures\IMG_0583.JPG** |
| **C:\Users\Travis Bumgarner\Google Drive\Peace Corps\First Three Months\System Pictures\IMG_0585.JPG** | **C:\Users\Travis Bumgarner\Google Drive\Peace Corps\First Three Months\System Pictures\IMG_0590.JPG** |







