

# **Hydrophilanthropy in Honduras: Potable Water Systems in Rural Northwestern Honduras**

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# Talk Organization

- Purpose, Location, Climate, etc.
- **Why Work in the Sierra de Omoa?**
- Honduras Project
- **Honduras Project – Future**
- Conclusions
- **Readings**

# ***Hydrophilanthropy***

***A Definition: Altruistic concern for the water, sanitation, and related needs of humankind, often manifested by contributions of work, money, or resources. -- M. Campana***

# *Purpose – Potable Water*

- **Since 2001: worked with Honduran villagers & agencies in the Sierra de Omoa to construct and maintain simple drinking water systems**
- **Villages: 100 – 350 residents and up to 50-60 or so houses**
- **Basic system: small dam, piping, tank, chlorinator, and distribution lines to houses**
- **Worked with friends Alex del Cid Vásquez and Rolando López, and local political leaders**
- **Training and experience for US students**



**Villages located in the Sierra de Omoa, a rugged mountain range ~30-40 km NW of San Pedro Sula**

**Climate: Warm and humid with distinct wet and dry seasons. Average annual rainfall of 250 cm (~100 inches)**

# *Why Work in the Sierra de Omoa?*

**According to my Honduran friends:**

- **Relatively few people – little political power**
- **Rugged topography, poor roads – politicians, civil servants don't often want to make the effort to visit or work there (except during election season)**
- **NGOs (charities) don't want to work there – risk of failure is too high**

**So why work there?**

***People need potable water!***

# Rugged Topography, Remote Locations









# *Honduras Project – 1*

- **Alex del Cid Vásquez: former Municipio de Omoa city councilman**
- Alex convinced mayor Prof. Ricardo Alvarado to implement a rural potable water supply policy (= votes)
- **He indicated to the mayor that water is an important issue for women and girls: *they collect the water (= more votes)***
- Related issues of education and sanitation: important to women and girls.

# *Honduras Project - 2*

- **Partnered with Municipio de Omoa**
- Completed systems in Brisas del Rio Cuyamel, Los Mejias and Las Palmas
- **Identified more villages needing potable water systems**
- Municipio has provided support: road maintenance, vehicles, running interference with officials, escorts, etc.



Prof. Ricardo Alvarado, Mayor of Municipio de Omoa, with Michael Campana & Rolando López



Tank at Brisas del Rio Cuyamel



# Morality Play – Brisas del Rio Cuyamel, June 2012





# Tank at Los Mejias - July 2013



# Celebration - Los Mejias, July 2013





# Community Sign



Bienvenidos sean a la aldea de:

**LOS MEJÍAS**



A 800 metros SNM  
Productores del mejor café del parque Nacional Cuyamel - OMOA  
3 DE JULIO DEL DOS MIL TRECE

# Junta de Agua: Las Palmas



## *Honduras Project – Future*

- **Recently started project in El Tamarindo in the Municipio de Choloma, which is providing tank**
- **Choloma is larger than Omoa (220,000 to 30,000) and wealthier**
- **Overall: political climate is uncertain – November 2013 elections**
- **New political party: PAC**
- **Violence – student participation?**



# *Conclusions*

- 'Handshake' partnership: worked well, all parties benefitted
- **Based on trust and mutual benefits**
- Essential for small foundation to accomplish its objectives
- **Ancillary benefits to villages – education, economics, etc.**
- Future?

# ***Readings***

1) September 2010

***Water Resources IMPACT***

***(<http://bit.ly/9ColgZ>)***

2) August 2010 ***J. of Contemporary***

***Water Research and Education***

***(<http://is.gd/hK4ge8>)***

3) ‘Hydrophilanthropy’ category at:

***<http://www.waterwired.org>***

***Thank You!***  
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**WaterWired blog:**

**<http://www.waterwired.org>**

**WaterWired Twitter:**

**<http://twitter.com/waterwired>**

**ACJF:** **<http://www.acjfoundation.org>**

***"The road to help is paved with good intentions."*** – **Tracy Baker**