

Study Confirms Sustainability of WaterPartners Projects



Children in a village in Honduras enjoy their new water system provided with the support of WaterPartners donors.

WaterPartners International has always been characterized by the sustainability of its projects. And now, a leading academic organization has provided third-party validation. Emory University's Center for Global Safe Water studied a random sampling of the first 39 projects that WaterPartners completed in Honduras going all the way back to the founding of the organization in the early 1990s. Of the 10 project sites surveyed, 100 percent were still operational, even though some had been in existence up to ten years or more. Satisfaction with the system was also extremely high, with 98 percent of respondents still satisfied with their water system.

Historically, very little research has been conducted regarding the sustainability of water supply projects. This study represents a significant step toward quantifying success and identifying opportunities for improvement.

“We are very gratified by the results of the study,” says Gary White, executive director and co-founder of WaterPartners. “Sustainability has always been the cornerstone of our projects. In fact, one of the reasons we created WaterPartners was because half of the water projects being built around the world were failing. This study validates that our methods promote long-term sustainability.”

WaterPartners' model puts organizational and financial structures in place for communities to independently operate and maintain water systems. Each community has an active water committee governing the operation of the water system, and users paying a water bill to cover the costs of operating and maintaining the water system.

“The women feel happy about having water in the house,” says Dolores Martinez, a community member in one of the villages studied. “I can't explain all the good it has done.”



Emory University researcher Matt Freeman interviews a local resident about his satisfaction regarding his water project.