Our Mission

Etta Projects was created in 2003 to honor the life and legacy of Etta Turner, a teenager who believed in the power of the individual to effect meaningful change. Though Etta Turner’s young life ended tragically in November 2002 while she was in Bolivia as a Rotary International Exchange student, her inspiration lives within us.

Her charisma and energy continue to guide our projects, encouraging us to engage in open dialogue, harness community participation, and validate the ideas and opinions of all people. Etta stirred us to transcend poverty by creating true friendships and to find joy as we make a positive difference in our world.

Etta Projects engages and partners with Bolivian communities to identify, prioritize, and implement sustainable solutions to the health, education, and economic challenges of poverty.

Attainable. Sustainable. Results.

Generating Change

Making a sustainable difference in rural Bolivia
improved health

In Bolivia, the second highest mortality rates are caused by infectious diseases and poor sanitation facilities. Etta Projects collaborates with the Bolivian Health Ministry, schools, international aid agencies, and communities to improve health. We believe that education, income generation, and increased access to better health, and therefore we provide village health promoters with the necessary training to evaluate families to practice safe hygiene and sanitation. In addition, Etta Projects has created a sustainable means to establish local water and sanitation systems and buy components available in villages.

Parasite levels remain at 0% in participating families using our filter system. As of 2009, we’ve positively affected more than 7,500 people. Etta Projects collaborates with Bolivian health officials to train village health promoters. As a result, in 2010 healthy children were able to access medical services, and chronic illnesses were prevented. This experience was certainly life changing. Etta Projects fills a tremendous need in a very humane and caring way. “My children and I have learned a lot. I used to think I needed to make their hands and keep my room clean. Now I understand a lot about a lot of things I learned before. I am not sick anymore and I’ve learned how to use soap and water. I wash my hands and I’m healthy. Now we know.”

Good nutrition

Etta Projects has responded to this need by introducing nutrition and education programs, including other gardens and ecological composting latrine projects, gravity fed water projects, and an integrated approach to improving health: linking clean water, adequate sanitation, good nutrition, and improved overall childhood mortality in Bolivia. Education is at the heart of everything we do: children learn to improve health, and improve overall childhood mortality in Bolivia.

Community contribution. Etta Projects constantly shares its development approach with donor organizations that also are interested in making a practical, effective way to make a difference in the developing world. We educate these organizations on the complex web of issues faced by the impoverished and invite them to create tangible projects relating to their local community. Volunteer service. The opportunity to serve alongside Etta Projects is meaningful life experience for individuals who want to give their time to service in a developing country. They make incredible contributions in a variety of ways, from sanitation projects to healthcare.

“Etta Projects was certainly life changing. I am not sick anymore. I am not inviting illnesses into my home anymore. I learn about a lot of things I learned before. I am not sick anymore. I’ve learned a lot. I used to think I needed to make their hands and keep my room clean. Now I understand a lot about a lot of things I learned before. I am not sick anymore and I’ve learned how to use soap and water. I wash my hands and I’m healthy. Now we know.”

Bolivian children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition. We have responded with several sustainable initiatives, including other gardens and ecological composting latrine projects, gravity fed water projects, and an integrated approach to improving health: linking clean water, adequate sanitation, good nutrition, and improved overall childhood mortality in Bolivia.

Bolivia has the second highest mortality rates in the southern hemisphere. With most deadly diseases and illnesses preventable, educating people to practice simple solutions like hand washing and food hygiene saves lives daily.

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We listen, learn, and teach

Education is at the heart of everything we do: children learn to improve health, and improve overall childhood mortality in Bolivia. Everyone has a voice. We talk to people of rural Bolivia what they need—what they know they need. Our job is to fully understand their needs and work to find solutions that are sensible, cost-effective and sustainable. We provide an inclusive forum that allows people to identify problems and solutions. We listen, learn and teach. Everyone has a voice.

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