



April 2006

## Project Update: Santa Cruz de Gualcince, Honduras

### Project Location:

Southeast Gualcince in the department of Lempira, Honduras.

### Beneficiary Information:

Number of Households: 51

Number of Beneficiaries: 235

### Project Status:

Ongoing; Scheduled end date, May, 2006.

**Project Budget:** \$32,973

**Cost per Beneficiary:** \$140



### Background

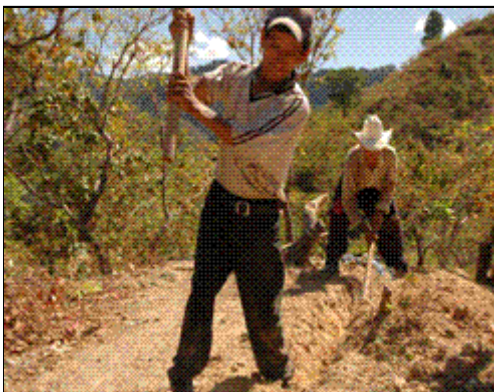
The village of Santa Cruz, Honduras, faced a severe water and health crisis. Women and children spent hours each day collecting water for household use and drinking. Water was either collected from small springs/waterholes or from small springs near neighboring villages, during the dry season. Often miles away from their homes, most of these sources were contaminated. Water-related diseases, such as cholera, were high.

Local sanitation customs further impeded access to safe drinking water. Most community members used open, poorly constructed, public latrines that were not only dangerous but contributed to the local water contamination. Further unsanitary conditions and practices at the household level, such as the absence of sanitary latrines, unsafe waste disposal and unhygienic behavior in childcare and food preparation, created a dangerous environment especially risky for children's health. A lack of sanitation facilities in schools helped transmit diseases and kept girls out of school.

The incidence of water-related diseases and malnutrition were on the rise in Santa Cruz, fueling the cycle of poverty and disease.

### Project Objectives

The primary project objective is to improve the health and lives of the community of Santa Cruz by



Community members digging the trench for the new pipeline.

constructing a sustainable potable water system, increasing community-level participation and organization, installing latrines; educating the community on health and hygiene, and protecting the watershed.

Specific objectives include:

- Construct a sustainable, functioning water system.
- Install taps and construct outdoor washbasins for each household, community center, and future points of service.
- Construct household drainage pits to dispose of wash water.
- Establish individual household latrines for all participating households.
- Achieve participation of all beneficiary families in the construction of the new system.

- Organize and train the community in the administration of the community’s potable water system.
- Train “fontaneros” (plumbers) to ensure maintenance of the system

**Project Summary**

The project currently under construction will provide clean water to every household in the community by capping a local spring (approximately 2.3 miles from Santa Cruz) and piping the water to each household using a gravity-flow water system. Household pour-flush latrines and hygiene education will also be important components of this project.

To ensure system sustainability, community members will be trained in system operation and maintenance. In addition, residents will determine a monthly water usage fee, which will go towards a repair fund to pay for future system maintenance.

**Activities Completed**

Prior to construction, our partner held community meetings to confirm local commitment to the project. Every community member attended these meetings and formally committed to the execution of the project. Our partner also conducted a feasibility study of the new water source to ensure that it would be able to meet the water needs of the entire community.

Organization and Training

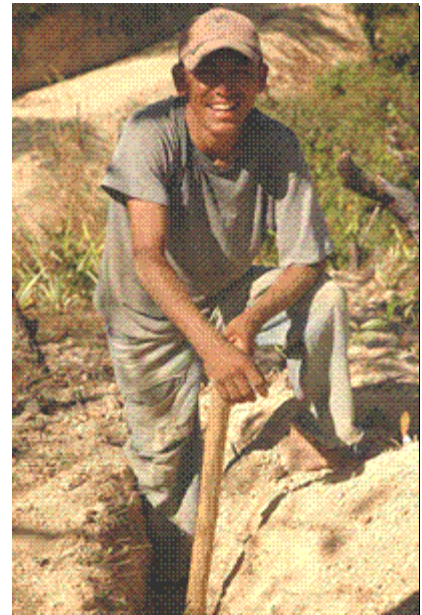
A water administration board was elected to oversee the construction and later the maintenance of the new water system. In addition, community members attended a series of training workshops focusing on water system administration and hygiene and sanitation education.

Project Construction

Construction of the water system is nearing completion. The community has actively participated in each part of the project and provided all of the labor and local materials. To date, the spring has been completely capped and the main pipeline (more than two miles long) has also been installed.

**Problems Encountered**

The project encountered several delays due to the national elections in November, the holiday season and the December coffee harvest, leading to a set back in the overall construction work plan. In spite of these delays, household connections remained on target and are projected to be complete by the end of May. We are also projecting the household washbasins and latrines will be completed on time as well.



A local community member taking a break from digging the pipeline trench for the new water system.

**Continuing Activities**

Organization and Training

Trainings are still ongoing in the community. A significant portion of the next reporting period will focus on health and sanitation education. Currently, trainings on system operation and maintenance and watershed protection are planned for future dates.

Project Construction

Significant progress has been made on the distribution tank and distribution network. Once completed, the final stages of system construction will be set in motion including installation of individual household water connections and washbasins. Significant progress has also been made on household latrine construction, with more than half of the participating households having fully excavated their tanks and begun installation.