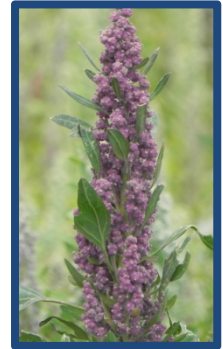


Site Visits to Bolivia

Between February 11 and February 15, 2014, Lou, Teresa and Sean Harrington visited the Suma Jayma team in Bolivia. During the visit, Lou was able to discuss organizational issues with Braulio Rojas and Jaime Rosas, the brothers that run the Bolivian NGO, related to Suma Jayma regarding legal status within Bolivia as well as long-term plans having to do with sustainability of the organization. Braulio and Jaime shared the challenges they face regarding funding the needed infrastructure projects they're involved in, as well as the trials and tribulations related to getting the well drill rig through customs and then with early attempts at well drilling in the region. They also proudly showed off the many improvements they had made to the drill rig since its arrival in Bolivia (more on that later).



Quinoa in bloom

Lou was also able to meet with Jason Obergfell to discuss ways in which he and WEFTA could collaborate in the future to benefit both the work of WEFTA as well as Jason's mission in Bolivia since ending his tenure as a Maryknoll Lay Volunteer in the Cochabamba region. Jason, a civil engineer from the U.S., has been periodically involved in the work of Suma Jayma since arriving to Bolivia over seven years ago. We are hopeful that he will now be free to become more consistently involved in the work of WEFTA, either in the form of support for the work of Suma Jayma/WEFTA, or by way of a strategic alliance between his work and supporters and WEFTA.

Some highlights of the site visits include:

Ecological Latrines (dry latrines) and Manual Hand Pumps of Batallas: We were able to visit with several families that received support from Suma Jayma with the construction of ecological latrines. It was clear during these visits that the ecological latrines were well received by the community members that benefited from that program and are using the latrines properly.



Ecological latrine and manual hand pump and well in Batallas

Community Water System of Machacamarca: This project is one of the largest, most expensive and far-reaching community water system projects that WEFTA has ever been involved in. Together with Braulio we were able to visit the site of the diversion structures and large subterranean water storage tank constructed to serve a community of approximately 200 families. The system collects surface water from a stream and includes a chlorination system at the tank inlet. Braulio explained that there

are several other adjacent communities that have expressed interest in connecting to this successful system. The municipal government has indicated that they may be able to help with the principal structures, including larger intake infrastructure, much larger storage facility, and main trunk lines to provide water to the communities. Braulio indicated that the limitation the government has is with connecting the homes to the mainline. For some families this is not problematic, but for others the cost will be beyond their reach. The Suma Jayma team will work with local community leaders in preparing a formal proposal dealing with connecting to the main trunk lines for those families that will not have the financial means to fund the work but will provide all the physical labor required.



L-Braulio's wife Basilica at the current surface water diversion site structure. R-Braulio explains some history of the Machacamarca project at the underground storage tank

Community of Igachi, Municipality of Batallas: A general assembly was held to discuss the possibility of help from WEFTA with the construction of ecological latrines for the families of Igachi. Several community members expressed their desire to have adequate sanitation facilities, and asked if WEFTA would consider the inclusion of showers in the final design. We discussed the possibility that the cost of the shower facilities might be the counterpart that each family pays, along with the labor required to construct the latrines, of course.



Igachi residents meet with Suma Jayma and WEFTA to discuss sanitation needs while kids make their own fun!

Meeting with Director of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) of La Paz, Bolivia: On



February 13, 2014, Lou and Braulio met with Fernando Aramayo, director of the American Chamber of Commerce of La Paz where they presented a synopsis of the past work of Suma Jayma and WEFTA, and discussed with Mr. Aramayo the various ways in which the members of AmCham Bolivia may be able to support this work. Mr. Aramayo seemed sincerely interested and agreed to present such ways to collaborate with the various AmCham members at the next gathering.

Well Drilling Rig: Lou, Teresa, Sean and Jason were able to finally see the drill rig that WEFTA had helped purchase and ship to Bolivia to support the work of Suma Jayma in providing safe, reliable water sources to the various communities of the Altiplano region who do not have the option of developing spring-fed or other water sources. The group was impressed with the initiative and ingenuity on the part of the Suma Jayma staff to make important improvements to the drill rig, and also participated in the formal 'challada' of the drill rig which consisted mostly of the spraying of beer all over the rig!



R-Jaime explains the many improvements Suma Jayma has made to the rig. R-The water well drilling rig

Rain Catchment at communities of the Municipality of El Choro, Oruro: This community has been adversely impacted by mining activities in the region which have left the traditional sources of water dangerously contaminated and unsafe for human consumption.

The president of the community organization travelled to El Alto to meet with Lou and Braulio and discuss the status of the local efforts in developing a safe water source for the community members of El Choro. It was agreed that a rain catchment system at each home would probably make the most sense, and the locals, with help from Suma Jayma, will gather more data regarding average rainfall totals and frequencies to help determine the appropriate sizing parameters for the systems.



In Oruro, Braulio and Lou visit with the president of the El Choro community