

Summary of Progress regarding Education and Water Projects in Malingua Pamba & the contiguous 7 communities, Ecuador April, 2003 through November, 2011

Apr '03 Pam Gilbert, recently retired math teacher from Boulder, CO got lost in the Andes. Two indigenous (Quechua) boys who were walking home (2 hrs) from their Saturday high school lessons, went 1.5 hrs out of their way to help her. She was touched by their gracious help and their passion when they spoke about the importance of education. She didn't realize that the gentle yet strong Kichwa (Quechua) spirit was about to change the direction of her life.

Oct '03 After dreaming about the boys and feeling the passion which radiated from their eyes when they spoke about their desire for a secondary education, Pam returns to Ecuador to try to help them. She discovered that their community only provided a very mediocre elementary education in a classic one-room school with one teacher for all 6 grades. The president of the community suggested building a classroom. The labor will be provided through **mingas** – "volunteer labor" for which the Quechua are famous. She agrees to return and provide funding for the materials (\$1,000). Meanwhile, Pam's friends got inspired by the chain of events and sent an unsolicited \$4,000 in their Christmas cards.

Apr '04 Pam returns with \$5,000 and the work begins in earnest on a large classroom plus an apartment including a **shower**. to be used for 2 teachers (who arrive from Latacunga, the county seat 2.5 hrs away).



Minga is Quechua for 'barn raising'

Front: classroom Back center: Shower
Back left: 2 bedrooms Back right: kitchen/lv room



Sep '04 Inauguration of our Colegio (secondary school) with 31 students in '8th grade'. The people were SO proud! Unfortunately our **shower** didn't work. The water pressure wasn't consistent for proper functioning of the flash heater and the shower occupant often got scalded.



Apr '05 We build a two-holer composting toilet with passive solar features and a mini-greenhouse. (Note: doesn't need water to work.) Meanwhile, we are trying to solve the shower problem. All the while, we are losing our teachers who are used to a more comfortable environment as they live in Latacunga.



Nov '05 All of our volunteers are getting sick while in Malingua Pamba; also I see that the children don't look really healthy; so, I decide to get some help on addressing clean water plus fixing our **shower**. I applied to various organizations to help. Engineers Without Borders (EWB)-Denver Chapter unanimously accepted the challenge.

Apr '06 The Malinguans started work on the 2nd story of our colegio.



The first EWB team arrived in Malingua Pamba. We slept in the top floor of the *newly finished* second story of our colegio. They interviewed the community, GPSed the existing springs up in the 'loma' (mountain); and observed rudimentary water system. The EWB Team was also captured/captivated by the Quechua spirit.



In the 2nd Story of "Colegio La Minga" there are 2 classrooms, First Library and Computer Lab (no internet).



Apr '07 Two instrumental EWBers – a doer and an organizer. Brad Davidson and Debbie Hathaway. Spearheading 3 semi-annual visits of EWB with incredible results!





Teaching plumbing lessons. Training teenages in GPS & water gauge measurements.

Nov '07

Continuing the work on the Potable Water System for 7 communities.
A "trenching *minga*" for burying PVC and a lesson from Mark Richards, EWB.



Result of the delivery of donated sewing machines & fabric; lessons in making simple backpacks AND the first micro empresa.



Apr '08

Brad designs a re-usable tank form (for pressure reduction and sediment removal). Airline Ambassadors transports it from Colorado to Ecuador - gratis. The people are enamored with this tank form and in 3 days prepare & pour tank #1. The Quechua transport the forms to the next location – gratis. ;-)



On the 4th visit of EWB, we now have potable water to the school “campus”. These kids can brush their teeth after lunch; these boys were delighted to take a hot shower;



Nov '08



A present for La Pamelita: The students painted the colegio and the newly poured bleachers.



First puzzle they ever saw. No one would leave until it was completed – 4.5 hrs later!



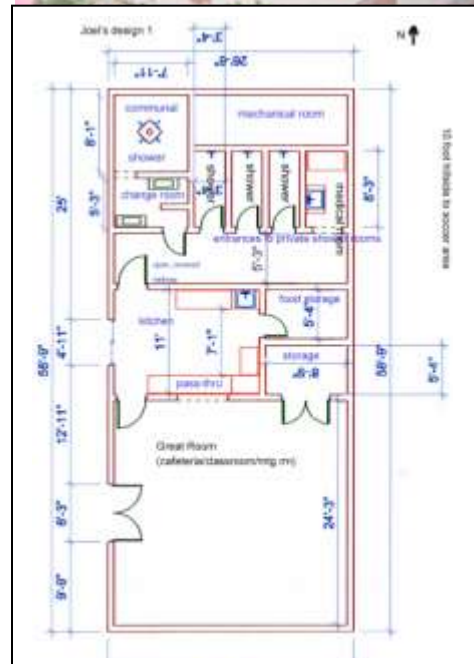
They are so grateful for water that they made up a special "Water Dance".



Apr '09 "EDIFICIO GRANDE" – beginning stages for the Educational & Community Building



My godchild, Nataly started a rebar moving minga for 5 yr olds. ;-)



Oct '09 In just 5 months, and *many mingas* later, this 25' x 80' building had a foundation, a roof and walls.

INCREDIBLE!

They are very excited about this building, very proud of their work, and say "we can live with dignity!"



Jul – Rotary International Matching Grant bought the material for the 1st Irrigation Team of EWB
 Oct '09 began the immense task of building tanks, etc. The people moved 20 tons of material – sacks of cement, sand, and gravel - on their backs to the 2 – 5000 gallon tank sites. Then they buried PVC from the source at 13,000 ft to Tanguiche at 9,000 ft. La Directiva, the board of directors for irrigation, reports that people are VERY pleased as are the potatoes!



Not only do we have “sweat equity” (above), but (below) we have two Boards of Directors (Potable and Irrigation) i.e. maintenance, improvements, and dues collection.

Even the locals are impressed by this ‘tank form moving’ **minga!**



Apr'09 – Apr'10

Culmination of the **Edificio Grande**

Purposes of Edificio Grande

- * Community Kitchen with **two indoor** sinks
- * Community Shower
- * Private Showers (3)
- * Storage for Community Tools
- * Medical Room
- * School Office
- * Classrooms / Meeting Room/ Cafeteria →



Apr '11 Presentation by the women who attended the Organic Farming Lessons classes. They are very proud of their produce. Later they received Nutrition lessons.



Jul '11 In the 10th visit in 5 years, Engineers Without Borders-Denver Chapter together with the Kichwa **completed** the Potable Water System for the 7 contiguous communities – approx 1,500 people. **WOW!**



Nov '11 For more info contact me at:
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Our next trip to Ecuador is scheduled for **Apr '12**. We're a global family. Contact me if you'd like to join us and be a participant in a **minga**.

www.escuelaminga.org

including all newsletters, testimonials from volunteers, and the story of how "in getting lost, I found myself"

