

WATER BRIGADES PROJECT PROFILE: LOS HATILLOS

Introduction

Los Hatillos is a community in the municipality of Choluteca in southern Honduras. There are roughly 145 houses divided between three neighborhoods: Los Hatillos 1, Los Hatillos 2, and Familias Unidas. Community members in Los Hatillos suffer from a lack of clean water, personal hygiene, sanitation infrastructure, healthcare, and education. Common colds, skin rashes, parasites, and diarrheal diseases are common. Few homes have

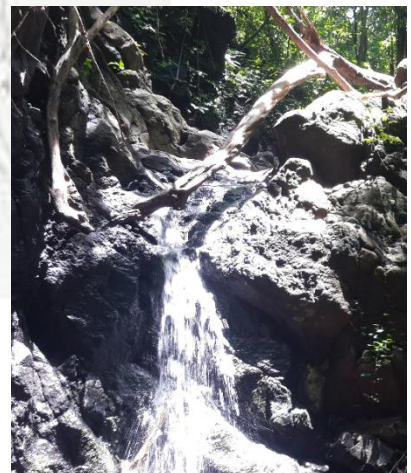
concrete floors, proper functioning latrines, adequate water storage, or efficient stoves with chimneys. The closest health center is in Guanacastillos, which is a half hour walk from Los Hatillos. It is not consistently staffed nor stocked with an adequate supply of medicine. Similarly, the closest secondary school is located in Guanacastillos; school is only offered until 6th grade in Los Hatillos. Many students consequently leave school and begin working to support their families after completing 6th grade. Like their parents, they often work in either the shrimp industry or agriculture.

Community Snapshot	
Population	650
Homes	145
People/Home	4.3
Electricity	Yes
Municipality	Choluteca
Department	Choluteca
Health Center	No
Distance from Compounds	30 Minutes
Road Condition	Good

Water in Los Hatillos

Los Hatillos has never had a centralized water system providing access to all members of the community. Community members use various strategies to obtain water depending on their neighborhood. Regardless of how they access water, there is no central treatment and few families treat the drinking water within their homes, increasing the risk of waterborne disease.

In Los Hatillos 1, some community members have built wells to fulfill the water needs of the community. These families allow their neighbors to fill buckets and tubs with water from their wells and the recipients then lug the water to their homes. Similarly, those living in Familias Unidas must go to nearby wells to collect water and carry it to their homes.



Water source outside Los Hatillos 1

Many of the wells dry up during the dry season and people have to travel further away from their homes to access water. Luckily, most community members in Los Hatillos 2 are connected to a local water system. It only works roughly twice per week however and many complain that the water has been contaminated by a local power plant. Community members believe that the contaminated water causes both skin rashes and diarrheal disease.

The Water Solution in Los Hatillos

In order to ensure that all community members have access to an adequate supply of clean water, Global Brigades is planning on building a gravitational system in Los Hatillos in which gravity will be used to distribute water. First, water will be collected from the source and then piped to two storage tanks, where it will be stored and treated with chlorine. Gravity will then be used to distribute the water to the entire community. This gravitational system is ideal because the available water sources are located at high elevations, so the water can be distributed without a pump, thus allowing more resources to be dedicated to further water projects in other communities.



Community members test a potential source with Global Brigades staff.



The school where student volunteers conduct workshops promoting sustainable water use

The springs provide 54 gallons of water per minute, more than a sufficient quantity for the community's population for up to twenty years into the future assuming a normal population growth rate. An intake structure will be constructed at the source, and then a sixteen kilometer conduction pipeline will be installed which will carry the water to a nearby sites where the tanks will be constructed. Both tanks – with capacities of 10,000 gallons and 5,000 gallons respectively--will be equipped with a chlorinator. From there, a full-scale distribution piping network will be installed, connecting all the houses of Los Hatillos to the centralized water system.

The seven members of the new Water Council will be trained on water treatment and system maintenance, administration, and operation. A community plumber will be identified and trained on the same topics. Upon completion, a monthly water fee will be established by the community that will be paid to the Water Council for water treatment, maintenance costs, and system sustainability. A Basic Sanitation Committee consisting of community volunteers will also be established and trained to help present educational workshops in the school to teach children about water and health related topics.