

Preliminary Report: Waste Management Team

The purpose of our research is to analyze the 2011 waste management pilot project, identify ways to strengthen the project, and assemble a general waste management template for neighboring rural and protected communities within the cantons of Jiquilisco. The Team Monterey Waste Management Group reviewed three studies from 2002-2010, and interviewed community members and program leaders concerning the development of a waste management system in Isla Mendez.

Within the past three weeks, the Team Monterey Waste Management group has collected and consolidated information concerning the past 9 years of waste management programs in Isla Mendez. Our team conducted a general needs assessment with Asociación Mangle through which we identified weaknesses of the previous waste management programs and identified the goals and objectives of the pilot project of 2011. Our group then designed a questionnaire to obtain supplemental information. In our research and analysis we applied the theories of waste management hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle) and zero-waste.

The first week, our team met with the Junta Directiva of Asociación Mangle (AM) to discuss the present waste management project. After a series of meetings with AM's Management Director Walberto Gallegos, Environmental Engineer and Project Coordinator Nicolas Funes, Agronomist Carlos Barahona, and Park Ranger and Representative of ADESCOIM, José Ofelio Herrera Martinez, our team designed several project proposals. The AM chose the proposal which consisted of an analysis of the 2011 pilot project and the creation of a general waste management template that could be replicated in other communities in the Bajo Lempa.

In our second week, the team conducted interviews regarding the 2002 waste management plan and identified weaknesses such as a lack of components to keep the program sustainable and a focus on waste removal without efforts in waste reduction. The team also conducted a problem analysis based on the following three reports:

- Descripción del Medio Social, Económico y Cultural, Medio Físico y Biológico en Su Área de Influencia (FIAES-Cuadro No. 3) (2005)
- Resultados del Estudio de Caracterización de los Residuos Sólidos, Realizado en el Cantón Isla Mendez, Municipio de Jiquilisco, Departamento de la Unión (2009)
- Conservación del medio ambiente y manejo adecuado de los residuos sólidos en la Isla Méndez, municipio de Jiquilisco, departamento de Usulután (2010)

In addition, our group decided to directly engage with community members by conducting a waste flow mapping activity and holding focus groups on current waste management behaviour.

After two weeks of meetings, our group created a questionnaire for health, education, and community leaders whose expertise has contributed to the waste management plan over the past 9 years. We also began compiling a questionnaire for LC-AM members who have influenced the current pilot program. We intend to refine and send the questionnaire to be filled out after the team returns to Monterey, California. In addition, we filmed an interview with Nicolas Funes to document the project description for future reference.

Team Monterey is using the United Nations Development Program as a potential resource model for a waste management development plan in Isla Mendez. The UNDP report, Waste Management in Rural Tourism Areas, focuses on a comprehensive zero-waste model which puts forth the concept that both consumers and producers are responsible for following the 3R's of waste management : reduce, reuse, recycle. Our framework will represent how the UNDP zero-waste methodology can be best applied to Isla Mendez.

Preliminary conclusions/recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations are those that our team considers the most useful and pertinent in the short term for the 2011 waste management pilot project. Our final report will include additional recommendations and an expansion of the following findings based on further research and analysis.

Conclusions

We have found that the community of Isla Mendez recognizes waste as a problem and a priority. In analyzing the project through community meetings we have identified a need for more clearly defined individual roles and responsibilities. We have also determined that alternative strategies should be developed in the case that primary strategies fail. If risks identified in the project proposal become a reality, alternatives will be necessary to allow the program to remain operational. Finally, our group considers it advisable that a long-term strategy be developed before the pilot project comes to an end, so as to ensure that Isla Mendez continues to progress in the development of a sustainable waste management system beyond a small-scale pilot project.

Recommendations

1- Produce organigrama

Our first recommendation is for AM to organize a meeting with all of the individuals involved in the waste management pilot project implementation. This meeting will aim

to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all involved and to devise mechanisms for improved communication among them. The objective of this meeting is also to design a comprehensive organigrama which will include names, titles, roles, and responsibilities (see attached example), and should be updated regularly. The organigrama will serve as a useful tool for future community leaders as well as delegations such as Team Monterey 6 and donors.

2- Create alternative strategies

Technical experts should consider developing alternatives in the event that elements of the primary strategy fail as a result of unforeseen problems. Generating alternatives will help ensure project success. The alternatives should be embedded within the strategic plan and the findings integrated into the Evaluation and Monitoring portion of the project. For example, in the event that the municipality does not perform their agreed upon role in the pilot project, alternative strategies will have already been identified and will already be available.

3- Develop a long-term strategic waste management plan

Prior to the completion of the pilot project, a long-term waste management strategy should be drafted to ensure the sustainability of the system. When developing the strategy, community input should be incorporated to include community priorities. Strengths and weaknesses should be documented by project leaders during the implementation of the pilot project, and taken into account when the long-term waste management strategy is designed. Increasing municipal involvement and integrating an internal monitoring and evaluation process are essential elements of this long-term strategy. The long-term plan will serve as a guide to community leaders once the pilot project is completed.