

IDPA- MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY BANKS

IDPA- Institute of Development and Peace of the Amazon - based in Tarrapoto.

Roberto Lay Program Director,

Antonio Moreno -Executive Director

IDPA is a past partner of the CEP Humanity Fund, although we have a new proposal from them that will be considered by the Fund in September.

Daina Green made the arrangements with Roberto Lay for our delegation to meet with the IDPA team in Tarrapoto . We have not funded any of IDPA's work for over two years.

Their modes of transportation of (2 Motorcycles, and a second-hand ½ ton), is crucial for IDPA team to reach communities- The requirement for effective personalised communication is key.

Hired technicians help with farming initiatives and other related projects.

IDPA visit to Pinto Ricodo Bank.

Background:

In the Pinto Ricodo area, Peruvian army and MRTA fought.

The MRTA was an armed movement aimed at establishing autonomy and overcoming the corrupt Fujimori government, now recognised as a dictatorship. In many of the communities we visited, there had been support for the MRTA, and attacks on the communities by the government military, who sent in people to torture suspected collaborators, which is the reason the communities had been evacuated. The residents had to go into hiding from the military, and only came back to their towns in the last year and a half.

Meeting with workers:

-When a farmer and leader of the bank volunteered to speak about the value of the fund and expertise and framework provided by IDPA, he added "It helps us build a new happiness"

Now there is peace, but peace is not enough" "We need to develop", "We are globalizing solidarity"

Another leader, Rosa Angulo stated the bank was formed , beginning with the "Mother's Club".

Rosa called a meeting with men and women from the community. Invited them to "Plant a Tree".

"That's how it started, to take care of the tree."

Men took control of operations, then women left. In 1985 it was a small organisation, until IDPA became involved in 1997, when the "Club" formed into a "Bank".

IDPA provided each woman with 30 soles. A total membership of 300, loans were to be paid back in 6 MOs. Following second rounds of credit a total of 3200 soles were paid back to bank.

Result: Men and women work together in Pinto Ricodo.

Weather is not co-operating. Draught is delaying harvest.

IDPA-technical teams help select plants. The plants are grafted and distributed among non-members and other gardens.

Rosa, Telma Angulo reported; Profit from credit and Mothers' Club members is also loaned, to other people of the community in need. "Step by step we will move forward".

Johnny Castilla Pisco-member of bank and Mothers' Club; "As a family that has benefited from the project, I am really grateful."

" We love our work and our environment"- coffee, citrus fruit will raise our standard of living

"We know our objective-we have vision-We hope San Martin will be a big lung...with the reforestation in dry area."

All planting by river's edge were done by Mothers' Clubs, the original pioneers who initiated the credit system-Planting trees protects homes, from sliding away in the mud. "We need more donations to buy all kinds of seeds"

Jorge-Technician-IDPA: Re: "Flying Nurseries"-some plants are almost extinct and very valuable. E.g., "Caperona"-Hardwood will start with planting seedling. -50-100 citrus plants need to be grafted within 8-10 MOs. We need a new building for workshops. Coffee grown in projects need improvement in quality.

Main goal is to continue development of processes of crop production to become competitive in the "Fair Trade" of Coffee and Citrus.

Point of Interest: Some fruits which were harvested during our rounds, surveying crops, and tasted by our delegation.: Guava, long gourds grown above ground.(Not what Canadians know as Guava, see photo) -Coca fruit-from coca plant-pulpy white, Sweet Lime-Lime Dulce, Pareba-looks like an Orange.

Necessary Nutrition: need to grow mangoes-grapes-Coma Rosa-oranges and tangerines, Soya beans for protein, and raise chickens and corn to feed chickens- raise pigs, for animal protein.

A plant named: Pishkumekuna, a parasitic plant which is claimed to remove rheumatism in people.

IDPA visit to San Antonio Cumbaza

To reach the Community of San Antonio Cumbaza, we crossed a river on foot due to severe flooding from storms, which washed out the bridge. Currents were strong and bottom was extremely rocky. Torrential rain pushed many rocks via the river up onto crops. Garbage came down river from Tarapoto into the fields.

Augusto Torres Grandos- community leader

IDPA's credit established tree nurseries, but he doesn't want to talk about it today.

Wants delegation to report about what the member of bank face today.

Land was flooded 4 times.-w of which were serious. " Lost everything that has been invested".

Hurricane cut down plants and rain washed them away. Lost penned in animals, livestock, guinea pigs and rabbits. - "Did not have time to pick up plates, possessions washed away."

"If it happened at night someone could have drowned."- " The river looked like an ocean"- "Could see whole trees being carried by River. It is polluted by garbage from Tarapoto.

300 people are affected by loss. Leader of community is asking IDPA for understanding.

-i.e. Still have to pay interest on loans- are not able to pay back current loans. Before floods members always paid on time, including interest.

Carmen Martella- School teacher said: the Bank of Cumbaza consist of "unified families" who farm and operate some small businesses.

Relating to devastation: "Time has been lost".

Augusto Torres Grandos: Santa Rosa, San Juan and San Martin lost their utilities- electricity.

Pipes were disconnected in the flood

"People have to cross river to bring back water every day"

-There isn't any telephone service to warn other communities in case of crisis. Roads are extremely bad- People are and feel isolated.

"Why are we so cursed? We thought we were getting ahead".

Roberto Lay-Program Director IDPA: We will set up "bridge financing" and communities should meet to make sure they're on the same page. Village should be relocated to higher land, perhaps grow rice in the low land.

This move will be subsidised by government.

"Nothing is Free. Nothing is Easy".