



SAIWI Panama Trip Report

January 2-19 2014



Participants:

In-Country Advisor - Patricia Wilbur (Peace Corps)

Trip Leader – Jamie Myers (UNR Graduate)

Students - Erik Cadaret (UNR Graduate) and Lander Kennedy (UNR Undergraduate)

Summary of the trip:

January 2-4

Three UNR SAIWI participants traveled from Reno, Nevada to San Francisco to stay at Erik's sister's house on January 2nd. On January 3rd, 2014, the participants traveled from San Francisco to Panama City. The participants met with the in-country advisor, Patricia Wilbur, in Panama City International Airport. After spending the night at Jamraka hostel in Panama City, the group went to the regional airport and traveled to Bocas Del Toro, Panama. Once in Bocas Del Toro, the group proceeded south to Isla San Cristobal via a 20 minute boat ride to Valle Escondido where they would spend the majority of their time aiding in the construction of latrines and other related activities for the community.



Figure 1: Bocas Del Toro

January 5-9

On January 5th, the group was acquainted with the community and the area. It was approximately a 20 minute hike to the construction site. The group was introduced to the residents of the household receiving the latrine and Patricia's community counterpart, Poli, who aids in all Peace Corps related construction. The household houses 3 women and 10 children. The group frequently encountered rainy weather conditions that limited construction time. Eight additional toilet seats were constructed at Patricia's house where the group was staying. The following tables summarize the work day tasks:

Date	Tasks
January 5	Leveling of latrine construction site, installing wooden frame for foundation concrete slab, completing the foundation concrete slab.
January 6	Construction of 6 latrine toilet seats for other uncompleted latrines in the community; Erik, Poli, and other community members went to Bocas Del Toro to obtain the rest of the latrine supplies.
January 7	While the family receiving the latrine transported the supplies from the dock to their house, time was spent at Arturo's house helping the family make cacao balls. Continued construction of waste compartments on latrine seats.
January 8	Continued work on seats while waiting for the rain to clear. Laid block foundation four high. Delay due to weather, only night spent working after dark.
January 9	Another morning delayed by rain. Goal was to make the foundation and lay top slab but only the foundation was made. Satisfactory work completed with respect to weather.



Figure 2: Progress made after the first work week

January 9-10

The group spent the evening of January 9 and the next day in Bocas Del Toro to engage in tourist activities after a hard week of work. They caught the last boat back to Valle Escondido to spend the night in the village to resume work the following day.

January 11-14

The following days were spent completing the first latrine started by the group as well as finishing almost two more latrines which had previously been started under the supervision of a separate project. Last night in the community was spent celebrating at the “Despedido” where Erik, Lander, and Jamie performed a melodramatic skit on how to properly use a latrine and what to do when things get clogged. Patricia led a short Q&A session to review and clarify which included candy give away. Community dance team performed a candle lit bachata and the three were then invited to participate. Edwin helped organize the clothing give away which went relatively smooth. Dance party followed.

Date	Tasks
January 11	Completion of top slab, afternoon spent with continued construction of neighboring latrine (from previous project) which consisted of installation of toilet seats, urine disposal system, and chiseling down the waste compartment back doors.
January 12	Another late start due to rain. Plastered the outside of latrine for support and aesthetics.
January 13	Had to re-plaster some areas where the rain had washed away the cement. Installation of stairs, wooden frame, and zinc roof - completed latrine! Enjoyed the afternoon swimming in the ocean.
January 14	Completion of unfinished latrine from Jan. 11. Constructed the wooden frame of a second uncompleted latrine (different project, different style) and installed 2 zinc sheets for the roof, the third sheet was not on site. Started chiseling out the back door of Patricia’s latrine so that she could switch sides of use.



Figure 3: Completion of latrine

January 15-19

On January 15th, Erik and Jamie headed to Bocas Del Toro on the first boat out to engage in tourist activities since their volunteer service was concluded. Patricia and Lander stayed behind to work on Patricia's latrine that required maintenance. Lander finished chiseling out the back door and scooped the decomposed poop onto a zinc sheet to allow the black earth to sun dry. Edwin and friend boated Lander to the middle of the ocean where she caught a water taxi to Bocas and later joined Erik and Jamie for the afternoon. On January 17th, Erik, Lander, and Jamie traveled to Panama City and engaged in tourist activities which included a trip to the Panama Canal. On January 18th, the three traveled back to San Francisco to stay the night at Erik's sister's house before traveling back to Reno on January 19th.

Recommendations

It was observed that the children in the community did not have many toys. One recommendation would be to include toys in the giveaway in addition to clothing. More baby clothes should be brought. Recommend to categorize the clothing a bit more when packing from the storage locker so clothes can be given away more efficiently. Additionally, some toiletries were given away but it could have been more beneficial if there were more supplies including soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrushes, etc.

Final Budget Summary

Description	Cost	SAIWI	Individual
Airfare	\$4,587	\$4,587	
Clothing bag checking fees	\$186	\$186	
Transportation (Taxi/boat to/from airport and village)	\$251	\$254	
Lodging	\$10-15/night (5 nights)		\$61 x 4 = \$244
Food	~\$200 per person		\$200 x 4 = \$800
Tourism	~\$250 per person		\$250 x 4 = \$1000
Latrine Supplies and transportation	\$187	\$45	\$142 (Paid by Tricia's funds)
Gifts for children	\$20		\$20
Total	~\$7,275 including Tricia's airfare	\$5,072	~\$530 per person costs