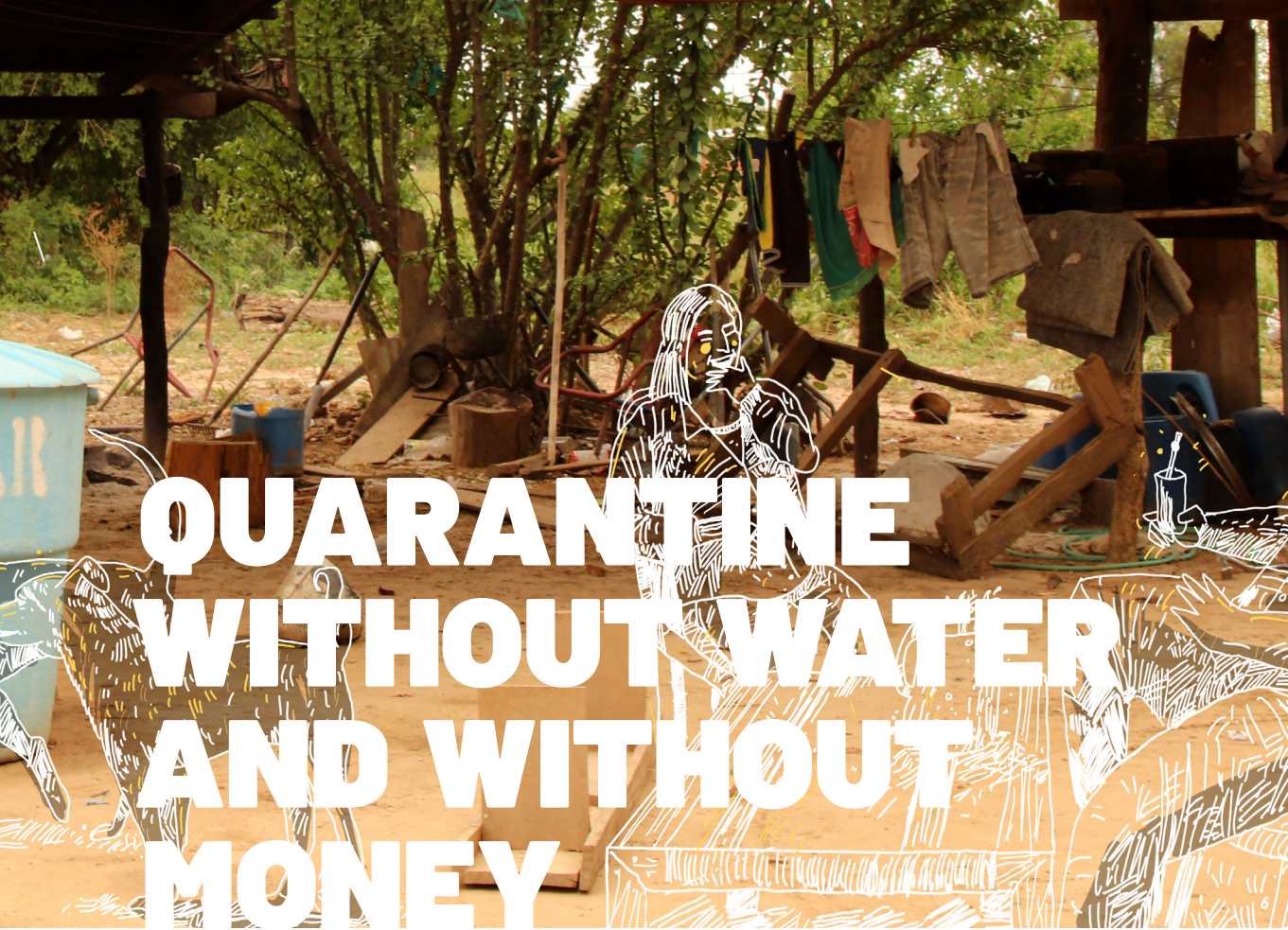




QUARANTINE WITHOUT WATER AND WITHOUT MONEY

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n April 13, 2020, about a month after the declaration of a health emergency in Paraguay, and establishment of a quarantine with other measures against the covid 19 pandemic, the leader of the Ayorean community of Campo Loro, located in the district of Filadelfia, Boquerón Department, Aquino Picaneraí, sent a video to his contacts announcing that they had run out of water due to drought that afflicts the area at that time of year.

Eight months after those terrible moments, Aquino was relieved by rains that fell in the December giving a respite from the dire lack of water. "We have waited for a long time for the authorities to dig a well in order to have safe water for the community. I heard of an aqueduct program here in the Central Chaco, but it has only reached the urban areas of Filadelfia, and they claimed that they had reached the indigenous peoples, but this was untrue," the leader of Campo Loro announced.

He indicates that the Boquerón governorate distributes water in the municipalities of Mariscal, Loma Plata, Neuland, and Filadelfia, but it does not distribute it to indigenous communities, so those communities continue to seek a solution for the water problem which they usually must ask the Municipality, or the Governorate for assistance, and in some cases, they help, in others, they



FACTSHEET

CASE: Campo Loro Community

LOCATION: District of Filadelfia, Boquerón Department

SUBJECT/HUMAN RIGHTS

AFFECTED: 3-Universal human rights3.1- Water. Access in quantity and quality, uses and contamination.

JUDICIAL/GOVERNMENTAL CASE

STATUS: Titled lands without stable drinking water.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE AFFECTED:

300 families (about 900 people)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: The Campo Loro community of the Ayoreo People is one of the oldest and most populous in Filadelfia, founded in 1979 by the American Evangelical Church Mission New Tribes (it remains, but solely religiously). Despite being 41 years old, it still does not have a drinking water supply system that guarantees quality of life for 300 settled families, who continue to depend on rain in one of the areas of the country where a recent drought lasted almost a year.

don't. "Our community grows, and our needs increase", he says, detailing that due to the high number of families, it is the most affected community.

Aquino confronted technical officials of the commune, indicating that for the animals that are raised in this predominantly cattle-raising area, mostly controlled by producers from the Mennonites, there is no lack of food. The cattle have enough pasture and water, and if they need, they are cared for by veterinarians unlike people who suffer from lack of food, water and medical attention, statements to which advisers reacted with looks of unconcern about the comments.

"They installed a pump here so that people can drink water from the cutwaters, but people don't want to drink that because those cutwaters are very old, and the water is not drinkable," Aquino claimed at the beginning of the quarantine through the organization Iniciativa "Amotocodie" ["Amotocodie" Initiative].

The subsidy policies of the National Government did not reach the community either, as detailed. "There are many difficulties to receive payments here in our area because Tekopora (a subsidy) has always been paid by BNF, Banco Nacional de Fomento [National Development Bank]. The BNF always brought money to pay the beneficiaries, but they gave the money to the Paraguayan postal service the last time, and they made a mess---worse than the BNF's. An example that I can tell because it happened to my family is that one of my daughters always collected Tekopora when it was brought by BNF, but when Paraguayan post service arrived, they told her that she would not receive subsidy because she works in the Filadelfia municipality, and has a salary of G. 900,000. They did not pay her. Where does the story that she earns that money in the municipality come from?" he questions.

The quarantine hit the community's economy hard as there were no more farm jobs that Mennonites could give the indigenous people, and claims to the authorities were not heard, in Aquino's words, "because of the contempt they have for the indigenous people."

Mateo Sobode Chiquenoi is one of the founders of Campo Loro. He has been a founder for more than 40 years and he recalls that in the first year they tried to build a water well themselves, but they were unable to have their dream of water come true due to the lack of suitable tools without proper equipment for a well.

He explains that the founding of the community was started with the American Evangelical Church Mision Nuevas Tribus (New Tribes Mission), and that currently, only one North American family remains from the group, which lives within the Campo Loro community occupying a house with other indigenous people of the Yshir ethnic group (ethnic group of the same linguistic family as the Ayoreo, the Zamuco).

Mateo is a member of the Campo Loro Council, and he stresses that they need help to build a well with the elements that guarantee drinking water for all families. He is perplexed because local authorities are paying lip service by claiming they help the indigenous people, but that they do not

say which community is receiving help, and in reality no known indigenous people have received any help for real solutions to their problems thus far.

“The water is good around here, there is a place where the well can be made, but we do not have the resources or real support from the institutions... There is a large tank that the National Government put in more than 30 years ago, and it stands there without being used because we do not know how to load it,” he explained.

He said that in 2018, the construction of around 96 social housing units was completed by the then Senavitat, Secretaría Nacional de la Vivienda y el Hábitat [National Secretariat of Housing and Habitat] -the Ministerio de Urbanismo, Vivienda y Hábitat [Ministry of Urbanism, Housing and Habitat] now-, whose project included the construction of wells for each house, but that these cisterns are very small (5,000 liters each), and some have already broken-down.

The complaint about the cisterns is due to the fact that, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), the estimated consumption of water per person per day should be about 100 liters. According to the organization Pacto Global, the average consumption is between 150 and 200 liters per day in the Central department of Paraguay, but this figure drops to 60 liters per day in the Chaco including consumption, and personal and household hygiene.

Ronald Picanerai, a teacher and current supervisor of Ayorean indigenous schools in the area, says that he moved to Campo Loro in 2017, after leaving the Tunucojnai community due to the lack of electricity and of other precarious situations. “The first year we moved, in 2017, we had enough water, but after the long drought

THE EXCLUSIVE DEPENDENCE ON RAIN





of this year (2020) we had a difficult situation. People had to ask the government and the municipality for help; people brought water from community cisterns, otherwise, we had to buy water from neighboring communities that have tanks of 30 thousand liters or more," he explains.

He details that the drought in 2020 lasted nine months, and that it was only at the end of the year, in December, that there were significant rains that filled some of the community's cisterns and cutwaters, but that the situation was desperate before, especially in the middle of the pandemic when several indigenous people tested positive, and some of them died.

"In recent months, before the rains arrived, people were very concerned wondering how they were going to have water because it is even very dangerous to look for water on neighboring farms since there are some persons who do not allow them to enter their fields," he detailed.

He said that, thanks to the management of the leader and the Council, they finally managed to get the Municipality of Filadelfia, the Boquerón Governorate, and even the SEN, Secretaría de Emergencia Nacional [National Emergency Secretariat], to get tanker trucks that brought water from neighboring communities to Campo Loro.

Ronald points out that officials from an institution arrived and conducted a survey about the cisterns of SENAVIT's service addresses that were broken, and that they promised to return to make repairs, however they have never returned.

The DGCCARN Declaration No. 1112/2016 is among the documents that are related to this project into which then SEAM, Secretaría del Ambiente [Secretary of the Environment] Ministry of the Environment today, approved the Environmental Impact study for the work, and it states the area where they intervened consists of 228 rural homes with two bedrooms of 41.25 m² each, corresponding to 9,405 m².

Be that as it may, the Senavitat Resolution No. 1,788 of 2017, with the number of beneficiaries approved, indicates that the total number of homes would be 96 which has a difference of 132 homes fewer than the previous document. The same document authorizes the disbursement to the company Arquitectónica SRL, responsible for the work, detailing that the total amount to be paid by the institution is G. 5,901,609,740, and that the contribution of the beneficiaries (indigenous people) would be of G. 310,611,039 (since several housing programs in the State portfolio foresee a State contribution plus a payment from each beneficiary family).



Both Aquino and Mateo state that they had not had any concrete proposal for a solution to the problem of drinking water supply for the almost 1,000 people that make up the Campo Loro community into the month of December.

They indicated that they went to knock on many public institutions' doors, and that their issues were heard, but no answer was given to the underlying issue which is the need for a well that permanently supplies potable drinking water was ever given.

But the need for drinking water is a common denominator for the populations of the Paraguayan Chaco, and in this sense, there are already several studies conducted, such as the one published by CPI, Centro Paraguayo de Ingenieros [the Paraguayan Center of Engineers] on the consultancy carried out in 2003 by engineers Guido Duarte, Silvano Frutos, José Ortíz Guerrero, and Dr. Juan H. Palmieri called "Study of Water Supply Alterindigenous people for the Central Chaco", financed by IDB, and STP, Secretaría Técnica de Planificación [Technical Planning Secretariat].

The work includes the community of Campo Loro in the development of the 'Rio Paraguay - Chaco Central Aqueduct' as one of the long-term objectives. "The aqueduct is a transitional work which aims to supply drinking water to the entire Central Chaco region, and in the long term, it should be developed to its full potential, extending through the construction of branches to Lolita, Mcal. Estigarribia, and Campo Loro,

being integrated with existing systems," according to the study.

On November 13, 2020, the draft of POUT, Plan de Ordenamiento Urbano y Territorial [Urban and Territorial Planning Design] of Filadelfia was presented to a group made up of different sectors of society, including leaders of the Latino neighborhoods (Paraguayans), villages, and of the neighborhood Center for European Descendants, of indigenous communities, as well as of civil society organizations, PCI, ASEC, Red Cross, Cooperación Vecinal Fernheim [Fernheim Neighborhood Cooperation], and a representative of the Cooperative.

This undertaking is promoted by the Municipality of Filadelfia, and it has the support of "Alianza para el Desarrollo" ["Alliance for Development]" with funds from USAID, administered by WWF, and has a technical team which consists of Geam, Alter Vida and Mingara Consortium. Development of the project had a cost of USD 140,000.

Mingara is the organization that carried meetings with indigenous communities with the gathering concerning Campo Loro on February 19, 2020 having water as the first point of discussions that were conducted.

Julio Rodas, from the Mingara organization, states that he is not aware of a specific or detailed project that will propose the definitive solution for drinking water issue in the Campo Loro community.

IN SEARCH OF A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION





"The management plan does not have jurisdiction over indigenous lands because they are governed by the Indigenous Statute ... what was included is that around the indigenous communities, there will be a protected zone, and that there would not be crops produced with the use of pesticides in the area, for example," Rodas explains.

It indicates that there are several options that are covered in the face of the water issue in the Central Chaco area, such as a large water reservoir, larger cisterns, and shallow wells for the water to be filtered and treated.

"All these solutions are complementary because they also need crops, animals, and subsistence; there is no system that solves all of the issues ... It is supposed that the pipes of the Aqueduct will terminate at some point ... The first phase goes from Puerto Casado to Loma Plata, the second one goes from Loma Plata to Filadelfia and Neuland, and another branch goes from Teniente Irala

Fernández to Lolita, and now there is a third stage that will build internal networks in the communities, and a fourth stage of the pipes that will go up from Filadelfia to Mariscal Estigarribia, where there are also several indigenous communities along the way," he details, but clarifies that Campo Loro is not included among them.

While technicians and indigenous people were pointing out that they were not aware of a specific project for Campo Loro regarding its drinking water issue, in November 2020, Fundación Aquae [Aquae Foundation] published that Loisa Lariño Mora has received the Prize for the Best Final Master's Project from the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, a prize valued at 2,500 euros, for her work "Development of a Sustainable Community in the Ayoreo community of Campo Loro: design of a photovoltaic pumping and water treatment system as part of an act of Good Will".

Both the indigenous people from Campo Loro and the technicians of the different local organizations are not aware of the aforementioned work, or of the award given by the aforementioned Foundation. In conclusion, despite the preliminary studies and the full identification by the organizations of the State about a problem of access to water for a large indigenous community, there are no minimal indications that this problem will be properly addressed for a solution; therefore, the right of access to the vital liquid remains unanswered and yet more precarious.