

West of Water: For weeks prior to my return to La Gonave on March 20th we received many calls related to the rapidly increasing crisis of water in southwest zones of La Gonave. In December we had retrieved the solar pumping system from Dangirin after finding the well filled with rock from previous earthquake damage complicated by political jealousy.

La Gonave received only enough rain this year to create a cholera scare. Water lasted briefly in cracked and broken cisterns, unrepaired from the earthquake and previous dry season. The always critical need for water has now become a desperate issue on the south and western half of La Gonave.

In December, the well at Sousafilip was serving 10 communities as private cisterns were dry. We were dismayed when efforts to repair the Dangirin well were abandoned but returned home with hope in finding water near Troubaiggai. Early March the Sousafilip well was providing water for 25 communities as the Non Sema well was down to a dribble as were the kiosks in Port a Racquette. Alternative choices were boats to the mainland and salted water at Nan Boucan and Grand Vide..

Our arrival at the dock at Anse a Galets was greeted by a community representative to tell us the overused generator was broken. As anticipated, the overworked generator had stopped working and there literally was no water for drinking or cooking. Funds had been previously depleted for minor repairs. Salted water was being used for cooking and people were bathing and washing clothes with sea water.

Quick calls were made to Javan, Haiti Outreach engineer, who reported they had installed solar pumping on the Non Sema well that day. In the Anse a Galets district this well is three hours from south coastal communities and 4 hours from the west end of LGN. Drilling at Troubaiggai was planned for Wednesday with pump immediately installed if water was found.

At Ti-Palmiste market on Tuesday, we met community leaders and pastors asking *"what to do"* about broken cisterns, broken churches, broken schools and broken generators? This question has plagued us since the devastating earthquake of 2010.

Concern WW drilling project manager and water expert from Congo met with us and Javan on Wednesday. A meeting with WISH and Haiti Outreach was scheduled to discuss locations for a series of wells to be drilled this coming year They would begin in areas of higher population density and greater chance of success.

We presented history of our efforts to provide water in southwestern zones and surveys we had done in the past. Comparing geological and geophysics studies and the critical needs of the thousands living "west of water" Concern agreed to explore some potential sites in western zones. We agreed to address repair of community, church / school and individual cisterns and also repair and provide generators where appropriate. Concern offered technical help for our ailing generator.

All Wednesday night we received calls begging for repair of the generator. Thursday, the technician left for PaP to find parts. Saturday morning the technician called to say the part would be installed by 9 am as we left LGN praying for an interim "fix" for sud la gonave. Louis called, Monday with grateful greetings from many, as the generator was pumping overtime for 25 communities.

Pastor Shirley Edgerton, March 29, 2011. "Sir, give me..the water..I won't thirst again." John 4:15.