

NEWSLETTER

QBL works with the indigenous people in Bolivia to fund, construct, and monitor community-based projects, in a non-sectarian manner, to provide clean water, improve food security, promote better health, and generate local income.



Climate Change in Bolivia: A Cautionary Tale for a World Facing a New Paradigm of Sustainability

by John Scardina

At Quaker Bolivia Link we talk about a “Quaker response to poverty.” Over the years, we have worked with projects involving:

- ✚ village-wide clean water systems;
- ✚ food security through enhanced quinoa production, greenhouse construction to grow healthy produce, and llama farming with healthy stocks; as well as
- ✚ sustainable livelihoods like weaving and trout farming, among others.

The challenges we have faced over the years in the Altiplano have been formidable: no food security, 240 nights of frost per year, widespread illness due to poor sanitation and a lack of clean water, a high childhood mortality rate, widespread anemia, and few opportunities for income generation in rural villages. Now we must add another dimension to our struggle: **climate change**.

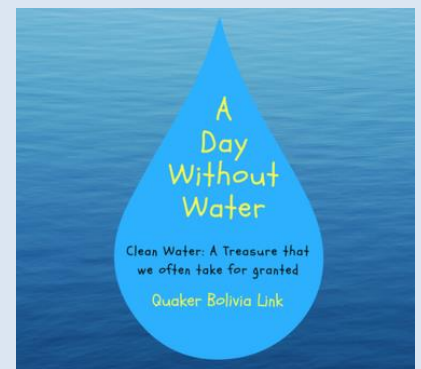
Here’s one simplified scenario of what is happening with climate change in Bolivia:

1. In 2012 quinoa became popular worldwide – especially in the USA. Between 2000 and 2014 the price of quinoa tripled. Farmers expanded their crops, going into debt and taxing the local water supply.
2. Peru also greatly increased their export of quinoa, and soon supply exceeded demand – leading to a crash of quinoa prices at the end of 2014.
3. Due to the *El Niño* weather cycle of 2015-2016, the rain stopped — and temperatures rose. Ancient wisdom about the timing of the quinoa crop and the old methods to manage quinoa production became obsolete.
4. Today farmers are faced with smaller crops, less demand, and banks asking for payment. Many have to leave their villages and migrate to the cities for work.
5. In La Paz – which gets its water from the glaciers on the sacred mountains (Potosi and Illimani) surrounding the city– inhabitants are beginning to run out of water at the end of the dry season because the glaciers are shrinking due to global warming. The city is overtaxed by the influx of rural population.
6. Villages are left with limited resources, few people, and additional challenges.

QLB INITIATIVE

“A Day Without Water...”

I have been working in Quaker schools for forty years. This school year – at both Friends Academy (Locust Valley, NY) and West Chester Friends School (West Chester, PA) – classes will participate in a study of Bolivia through a curricular simulation of a life which lacks a basic commodity we take for granted: clean water.



Students will gain a better understanding of world resource management, global adaptation to climate change, and the value of the Quaker adage, *“live simply so others can simply live.”*

Stay tuned in our next newsletter or QBL emails for more news of this initiative.

– **John Scardina** – QBL Board member since 2011.

Bolivia is one of the least developed nations in the world with a small "carbon footprint" in terms of carbon dioxide emissions. The country is heavily impacted by climate change to an extent disproportionate to its contribution to the problem. Thus, the opportunity to help villages remain sustainable – with stable population, access to clean water, multiple ways of generating food and income (like llamas, efficient quinoa farming, greenhouse produce, and trout farming), and improved education about climate change, sanitation, healthy diets, and a changing planet – is relevant to today's population of the Altiplano and to global climate change.

This is the work QBL has done and can continue to do thanks to your support. Won't you join us in the effort to combat climate change effects in Bolivia?



Meet Alberto: President QBL-Bolivia



Alberto Mamani is the President of QBL-Bolivia (Junta) and has been with the organization for more than 20 years. He is an Agricultural Engineer working on different projects around the country. His expertise and devotion to QBL has brought to the organization the perfect leadership needed to successfully implement all QBL projects. Alberto speaks Aymaran and always makes strong and personal connections with the villagers he meets.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Quaker Bolivia Link has partnered with several Rotary Clubs in New Mexico and Texas: Hobbs Rotary Club, Carlsbad Rotary Club, San Jorge Rotary Clubs, as well as District 5520 and District 4690 to bring fresh water to two indigenous communities: Palcoma Baja and Colque Alta located in La Paz, Bolivia. These two rural communities have never enjoyed local access to water. This project will be life-changing for approximately 200 families (direct and indirect beneficiaries). This project has also enjoyed individual financial support from two Rotarians and the Southeast New Mexico Cycling (a nonprofit organization) which is comprised entirely of Rotarians who approved a significant financial commitment to this Rotary Global Grant.



Currently QBL-US finds itself in a precarious financial position. Individual donations to our cause have been diminishing, and due to the small scale of our projects compared with larger international aid organizations, it has been challenging to secure significant foundation moneys to increase our funding base. Right now, funding is going out to Bolivia faster than it is coming in to QBL-US. We are hoping to increase donations so that the important water projects, agricultural aid, and other support that QBL provides for indigenous Aymaran people can continue. We depend on your generosity to maintain sound levels of funding for these vital projects and to keep QBL-US going. Visit: <http://qbl.org/donate/>

**With appreciation and gratitude,
Board of QBL-US**



Quaker-Bolivia-Link



@qbolivialink



@qbolivialink

www.qbl.org



**Quaker Bolivia Link
Airport Road - P.O. Box 2372
West Chester, PA 19380
Tel: 484-232-9581
contactus@qbl.org**

Quaker Bolivia Link is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are fully tax-deductible.

