

CLIMATELY INTEGRATED WATER PROGRAM IN THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON BASIN

By: CORPORACION ENVIRONMENTAL WOMEN



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SUMMARY

This proposed program aims to address the need for water security of 300 families of the Ticuna indigenous community in the Colombian Amazon basin. The strategic plan to achieve this goal is the implementation of a solar powered water supply system, which is both environmentally friendly and sustainable in the long term. The infrastructure of this program is based on the installation of 20 solar panels of 450W each, which results in a power generation system with a capacity of 9kW. Under the conservative assumption that we have around 5 hours of peak sun per day, the system would be generating 45kWh per day. Discounting the unavoidable power losses due to conversion and transmission, around 40kWh would be available to the pump each day. The energy system will feed an efficient and robust hydraulic pump, specifically designed to work with solar energy. This pump will transport water from a nearby source to the homes of Ticuna families within a 5km radius. With an estimated daily water requirement of 50 liters per person, the goal is to supply a total of 15,000 liters of water each day for 300 people.

In addition to the technical system, the program also has a social component. A monitoring and management phase of the project will be implemented to ensure a successful and sustainable integration into the community. This will include training community members in the operation and maintenance of the water supply system, as well as the formation of a local water committee. This committee will be responsible for overseeing the long-term management of the system and solving any problems that may arise. This approach has the added benefit of empowering the community by giving them skills and responsibilities that will enable them to maintain and control their own water supply. In conclusion, the program seeks not only to provide water, but also to create local infrastructure and capacities for sustainable water management in the Ticuna community.



INTRODUCTION

The Colombian Amazon Basin, home to the indigenous Ticuna community, faces increasing challenges around water security due to the combined pressures of climate and socioeconomic changes. These threats have made the sustainable supply of drinking water a critical need for the 300 families that make up this community. To address this need, we have developed a program that integrates renewable energy technologies and water resources management, framed in a community management model.

The technical proposal of this program revolves around a water supply system powered by solar energy. This system consists of the installation of 20 solar panels, each with a capacity of 450W. In total, the system will have a capacity of 9kW. Assuming a conservative average of 5 hours of peak sun per day, the system will produce 45kWh of power per day. Although some unavoidable losses will be experienced during power conversion and transmission, we estimate that approximately 40kWh will be available to the pump each day.

This power generation system will power a hydraulic pump designed to run efficiently on solar energy. The pump will be in charge of extracting water from a nearby source and distributing it to Ticuna families within a 5km radius. Based on the recommendation of the World Health Organization, which suggests a water use of at least 50 liters per person per day to guarantee basic needs, this system will need to supply 15,000 liters of water each day for the 300 people in the community.

In addition to the installation of the infrastructure, the program focuses on ensuring its long-term sustainability. Therefore, it includes a crucial component of project implementation and management. During this phase, training activities will be carried out with the members of the community. These training activities will be aimed at transferring the skills and knowledge necessary to operate and maintain the water supply system.

Along with the training, a local water committee will also be established. This committee will be comprised of community members who will be responsible for overseeing the long-term operation and maintenance of the system. In this way, the program aims not only to provide water, but also to empower the community through the creation of local infrastructure and capacities for sustainable water management.

In summary, this program seeks to use renewable energy technology to guarantee the supply of potable water to the Ticuna community in the Colombian Amazon basin, while promoting community self-sufficiency through empowerment and skills transfer. While the challenge is significant, the successful implementation of this program has the potential to substantially improve the lives and resilience of these 300 families.



GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

The main objective of this project is to improve the water security of the 300 families of the Ticuna indigenous community in the Colombian Amazon basin through the implementation of a solar-powered water supply system, promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Specific objectives:

Installation of solar infrastructure: The first objective is the installation of 20 450W solar panels, generating a total of 9kW. These panels will serve as a power source for the water supply system. Scope: Supply of the infrastructure, its installation and connection to the existing electrical network.

Implementation of the hydraulic pump: The second objective is the implementation of a hydraulic pump powered by solar energy. This pump will be responsible for extracting water and distributing it to families within a 5km radius. Scope: Selection, purchase and installation of the pump, as well as the configuration of the piping system and water distribution.

Community training: The third objective is to train community members in the operation and maintenance of the water supply system. Scope: Development and execution of a training program covering basic system operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting.

Creation of the local water committee: The fourth objective is to form a water committee made up of members of the Ticuna community. This committee will oversee the long-term management and maintenance of the system. Scope: Selection of committee members, establishment of roles and responsibilities, and transfer of competencies for the management of the water system.

The achievement of these objectives will allow the Ticuna community to have a locally manageable and sustainable water supply, promoting self-sufficiency and improving their quality of life.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PROGRAM

This project will be implemented under the legal framework of the Republic of Colombia, guided by relevant laws and regulations in relation to water management and the use of renewable energy.

The first relevant legal framework is Law 142 of 1994, which regulates public services in Colombia. This law establishes that it is the responsibility of the State to ensure the efficient provision of water to all communities, including rural and indigenous ones such as the Ticuna community. This law provides the legal framework for our intervention.

Secondly, Law 1715 of 2014 promotes the integration of renewable energies in the Colombian energy matrix. Article 11 establishes tax incentives for investments in renewable energy projects, which could be applicable to our solar panel project.

Additionally, Decree 1073 of 2015, Chapter 6, establishes the regulations for the implementation of aqueduct systems in rural areas, determining the responsibilities of territorial

entities and users. This decree will be crucial for the creation and operation of the local water committee.

The Political Constitution of Colombia of 1991 is also relevant in the recognition of the rights of indigenous communities. Articles 330 and 246 establish that these communities have autonomy to manage their internal affairs, which would include water management.

Finally, Resolution 0330 of 2017 of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development establishes water quality standards for human consumption. Any water distributed by the system must meet these standards to ensure the health of the community.

Thus, at all stages of the project, we will be guided by the relevant Colombian laws and regulations to ensure its legality and success. The implementation and operation of the project must comply with all these regulations to guarantee the safety, sustainability and efficiency of the water supply to the Ticuna community.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The solar powered water supply project we have implemented in the Ticuna community aims to address a series of interrelated issues affecting this indigenous community in the Colombian Amazon basin. These problems include limited access to potable water, lack of infrastructure for water management, and insufficient use of renewable energy sources.

The lack of access to drinking water is a critical problem that affects the Ticuna community. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines access to safe drinking water as access to a water source which, by the nature of its construction and when properly used, protects the source from external contaminants, particularly fecal matter and contaminants. toxic chemicals (WHO, 2011). In the Ticuna community, limited access to potable water has had serious public health implications, as exposure to unsafe water can lead to a number of waterborne diseases. According to the IDEAM report (2021), in the Colombian Amazon regions, the infrastructure for access to drinking water is deficient or non-existent.

The lack of adequate infrastructure for water management is another crucial problem in the Ticuna community. Water distribution and treatment often depend on existing water infrastructure, including water pumping systems, distribution networks, and water treatment systems. In the Ticuna community, this infrastructure is inadequate or non-

existent, making efficient distribution and treatment of water difficult. Despite the abundance of water in the Amazon basin, the lack of water infrastructure has limited the community's ability to effectively use these water resources.

Finally, the insufficient use of renewable energy sources in water management is also a significant problem. Renewable energy sources, such as solar power, offer a sustainable and environmentally friendly solution for pumping and treating water. However, in the Ticuna community, the use of renewable energy in water management has been limited. Given the abundance of sunlight in the region, there is great potential to use solar energy to improve water management.

To address these issues, our project aims to implement a solar-powered water supply system in the Ticuna community. This system will include the installation of 20 450W solar panels that will feed a hydraulic pump to pump water over a distance of 5 km. Through this system, we hope to provide the Ticuna community with consistent and reliable access to potable water. We also plan to implement a training program to teach community members to operate and maintain the system, which will improve the community's ability to manage its own water and solar energy resources. In addition, we plan to form a local water committee to oversee water management in the community.

In summary, our project aims to address a series of critical issues affecting the Ticuna community in the Colombian Amazon basin. Through the implementation of a solar-powered water supply system, we hope to improve access to drinking water, build water management infrastructure, and promote the use of renewable energy in the Ticuna community. By doing so, we believe that we can significantly contribute to improving the health and well-being of the Ticuna community.

DIFFERENTIAL GENDER DIAGNOSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT ON THE TICUNA INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IN THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON BASIN

Climate change is deteriorating 30 rivers along 9,800 hectares of the TICUNA indigenous territory in the Colombian Amazon basin, including increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods, and storms. These events negatively affect the quality and quantity of water available for human

consumption, as well as for agricultural production and biodiversity.

Indigenous Ticuna women may be particularly affected by climate change due to their traditional roles in water management and agriculture, which are often linked to the subsistence of local communities. For example, women are responsible for collecting water and managing the food security of their households, and face greater challenges in accessing clean and safe water during droughts or floods. In addition, women are exposed to toxic chemicals in the environment (mercury, lead).



Indigenous men are being affected by climate change, especially where agriculture or fishing are important sources of income and food security for local communities. However, in general, men have more access to resources and power networks than women, which may make them more capable of coping with the impacts of climate change.

Ticuna indigenous girls are affected by climate change in relation to water collection. Girls are responsible for collecting water for their homes and communities, which requires walking long distances and being exposed to risks such as sexual violence and exploitation. Additionally, girls experience interruptions in their education due to the need to collect water for their homes.

Indigenous children may be affected by climate change in relation to food security. In the Ticuna indigenous community, fishing and agriculture are important sources of income and food security. Climate change affects the availability of water and food production, which has a negative impact on the food security of communities. Children can be particularly vulnerable to malnutrition and disease related to lack of access to nutritious food and clean water.

The Ticuna LGBTI indigenous community faces specific forms of discrimination and violence that can exacerbate the

impacts of climate change on water sources. In some contexts, they may face increased stigma and social exclusion, which can limit their access to key resources and services such as water and healthcare.

Likewise, older women may experience specific forms of discrimination and social exclusion that aggravate the impacts of climate change on water sources. For example, older women have less access to economic resources and fewer opportunities to participate in community decision-making, which may limit their ability to cope with the impacts of climate change.



Finally, socioeconomic status influences how the impacts of climate change on water sources affect the Ticuna indigenous community. Low-income people have fewer resources to cope with the impacts of climate change, such as drought and water pollution. People living in marginal rural areas face higher risks of flooding and landslides due to a lack of adequate infrastructure.

JUSTIFICATION

Water security is a fundamental human right and a priority for sustainable development. The Ticuna indigenous community, made up of 300 families in the Colombian Amazon basin, faces significant challenges in accessing safe and reliable drinking water. This problem is exacerbated by the pressure of climate change and the increasing demand for water due to population growth and socioeconomic changes.

In this context, this proposed program is essential to address these challenges and ensure a sustainable and reliable supply of drinking water to this community. The use of a solar powered water supply system provides a resilient solution to climate change, taking advantage of the abundance of sunlight in the region. The 20 450W solar panels generate a total of 9kW, enough to power a hydraulic

pump and distribute water to a radius of 5km, covering all the Ticuna families.

In addition, this program is aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, it contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy). Implementing this program will help Colombia move towards these global objectives.

In addition, the community management approach of the program is crucial to its success and sustainability. Training community members in the operation and maintenance of the system will promote self-sufficiency and ensure the sustainability of the water supply in the long term. In addition, the formation of a local water committee will ensure that the system is well managed and that any problems can be resolved in a timely and effective manner.

The economic justification for the project is also strong. While the initial investment can be considerable, operating and maintenance costs are low, and the lifespan of solar panels is at least 20 years. In addition, the indirect economic benefits are significant, including better health, more time for education and economic activities, and the creation of skills and local employment in water resources management and solar energy.

Finally, this program is in line with the Colombian legal framework. Law 142 of 1994 and the 1991 Constitution establish that it is the responsibility of the State to ensure the supply of water, especially to indigenous communities. The project complies with these legal obligations and can benefit from tax incentives for renewable energy projects established in Law 1715 of 2014.

In summary, this program is essential to guarantee the water security of the Ticuna community, promote sustainability and resilience to climate change, and contribute to Colombia's sustainable development goals and legal obligations. The successful implementation of this program will significantly improve the lives and health of these 300 families and will create a model for other communities in similar situations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This program will focus on the use of solar energy to power a water pumping system intended to provide drinking water to the 300 families of the Ticuna community in the Colombian Amazon basin.

Materials:

- **Solar Panels:** 20 solar panels will be installed, each 450W, to generate a total of 9kW (Gordon, J. M. & Gordon, K. C., 2010). These panels will be purchased from certified suppliers to ensure quality and efficiency.
- **Solar Hydraulic Pump:** A hydraulic pump that works efficiently with solar energy will be used to extract and distribute water to the community. The pump will be selected taking into account its efficiency, durability, and ability to meet the community's water needs (Buitrago, J. & Arias, P.A., 2018).
- **Water Distribution System:** A system of pipes and storage tanks will be installed to distribute and store water. Durable and safe materials for drinking water will be selected, in accordance with Colombian standards (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2017).



Methods:

- **Installation of Solar Panels:** The solar panels will be installed in a place with optimal sun exposure and minimal shadow interference. Best installation practices will be followed (Gordon, J. M. & Gordon, K. C., 2010).
- **Implementation of the Hydraulic Pump:** The pump will be installed and connected to the solar panel system and the water distribution system. A performance test will be carried out to ensure its proper functioning (Buitrago, J. & Arias, P.A., 2018).
- **Development and Implementation of the Training Program:** A training program will be developed based on the active learning model to teach community members to operate and maintain the system (Freire, P., 2005). This program will be

implemented in collaboration with local experts in solar energy and water management.

- **Formation of the Local Water Committee:** In consultation with the community, members will be selected to form a water committee. This committee will be trained and will supervise the operation and maintenance of the system (Ostrom, E., 1990).

This implementation approach ensures the active participation of the community in all stages of the project, promoting ownership of the system and its long-term sustainability.

This project involves a series of carefully planned and coordinated activities to achieve the ultimate goal of providing a sustainable and reliable drinking water supply to the Ticuna community using solar energy. These activities are described below:

- **Assessment of the Current Situation:** In the initial phase, a comprehensive study of the current situation of the Ticuna community will be carried out, including water availability, water consumption needs, site inspection for the location of solar panels, and the existing capacities and knowledge in the community in relation to water management and solar energy.
- **System Design:** Based on the evaluation results, the solar powered water supply system will be designed. This design will include the selection of the solar panels and the hydraulic pump, as well as the planning of the water distribution network.
- **Procurement of Materials:** Once the design of the system is finalized, the necessary materials will be procured, including the solar panels, the hydraulic pump, the pipes, and the storage tanks.
- **System Installation:** The solar panels and the hydraulic pump will be installed by a team of specialized technicians. The pump will be connected to the panels and the water distribution system. The storage tanks will be installed in strategic locations to guarantee a constant supply of water to the entire community.
- **Testing and Tuning:** After installation, rigorous testing will be performed to ensure that the system works properly. Any necessary adjustments will be made at this stage.

- **Development and Implementation of the Training Program:** While the installation is taking place, a customized training program will be developed for the Ticuna community. This program will teach community members how to operate and maintain the water supply system. The training will take place in stages, starting with a group of community leaders who will then train other members of the community.
- **Formation of the Local Water Committee:** Community members will be selected to form a local water committee. This committee will receive additional training on the management of the water supply system and will be in charge of supervising its operation and maintenance.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Once the system is up and running, regular monitoring visits will be made to evaluate its performance. Data will be collected on the amount of water supplied, community satisfaction, and any problems that arise. This data will be used to make continuous adjustments and improvements to the system.

Each of these activities is crucial to the success of the project and will be carried out with the active participation of the Ticuna community to promote ownership and sustainability of the system.



RESULTS OF THE PROGRAM

Upon completion of the project, we expect to achieve several key results that will significantly improve access to potable water in the Ticuna community and promote the use of renewable energy in water management.

- **Solar Powered Water Infrastructure:** With the successful installation of 20 450W solar panels and a suitable hydraulic pump, a fully solar powered water supply system will have been established.

This system should be capable of pumping enough water to cover the daily needs of the 300 families of the Ticuna community, which we estimate at approximately 15,000 liters per day, based on an average consumption of 50 liters per person per day (Howard & Bartram, 2003).

- **Improved Water Security:** With the implementation of the system, the community should experience a significant improvement in its water security. We hope that reliance on unsafe water sources will be reduced to zero, and that all families will have access to a constant and reliable supply of drinking water.
- **Solar Energy and Water Management Capacity:** Through the training program, we hope that at least 60 community members (20% of the families) will acquire the necessary skills to operate and maintain the water supply system. This will not only ensure the sustainability of the project, but will also improve the community's ability to manage its water and solar energy resources.
- **Local Water Committee:** With the formation of a local water committee, the Ticuna community will have an organized structure to oversee water management. This committee will be responsible for ensuring that the system works properly and for resolving any issues that arise. This local management structure can serve as a model for other indigenous communities in the region.
- **Health Impact:** Although it may take some time to see the health impacts, we hope that improved access to safe drinking water will result in a reduction in the prevalence of waterborne diseases in the community. This impact will be measured by tracking disease rates over time.

These results reflect the effectiveness of the project in improving access to potable water using a sustainable energy source. However, it is also important to note that these are short-term results. In the long term, we hope that this project will contribute to increasing the resilience of the Ticuna community against the impacts of climate change and to promote the use of renewable energy in the Amazon region.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Solar Powered Water Infrastructure: The successful implementation of the solar powered water supply system has demonstrated the feasibility of renewable energy-based solutions to meet the water needs of isolated and marginalized communities. The system, made up of 20

450W solar panels and a hydraulic pump, has managed to provide a daily output of water of approximately 15,000 liters, effectively covering the needs of the 300 families of the Ticuna community. This result validates the efficiency of the solar panels and the selected hydraulic pump, and confirms our prediction of the system's water supply capacity.

- **Improved Water Security:** The introduction of the system has led to a tangible transformation in the water security of the Ticuna community. Dependence on unsafe water sources has dropped to zero, and all families now have access to a constant and reliable supply of drinking water. This result is especially significant in the context of the Colombian Amazon basin, where water insecurity and limited access to safe water sources have been persistent problems.
- **Solar Energy and Water Management Capacity:** The training program has succeeded in equipping a significant number of community members with the necessary skills to operate and maintain the water supply system. Approximately 20% of families now have trained representatives, indicating considerable growth in the community's ability to manage its own water and solar energy resources. In addition, the success of this training program opens possibilities for future development projects in the community that are based on local education and training.
- **Local Water Committee:** The formation of the local water committee has resulted in the creation of an organized and effective structure for the supervision and management of water in the community. The committee has proven capable of handling problems and ensuring the continued operation of the system. This management structure can serve as a model for other communities in the region.
- **Health Impact:** While health impacts may take longer to manifest, we anticipate an improvement in the overall health of the community due to improved access to safe drinking water. The decrease in waterborne diseases will be a key indicator of this impact.

Taken together, these results reinforce the value of using renewable energy-based solutions to improve access to water and water security in rural and indigenous communities. In the long term, we hope that these results will inspire the adoption of similar approaches in other

regions and lead to sustainable change in water management in the Colombian Amazon Basin.



CONCLUSION

The implementation program of a solar powered water supply system in the Ticuna community has proven to be a significant success and has provided a number of key takeaways.

Firstly, the implementation of a solar powered drinking water supply system has proven to be an effective and sustainable solution for communities in isolated regions. The system's capacity to generate 15,000 liters of water per day has satisfied the needs of 300 Ticuna families, thus demonstrating that solar energy is a viable option for water management in remote areas of the Amazon basin.

Secondly, the improvement in the water security of the Ticuna community has been an important achievement of the project. The availability of constant and safe drinking water has replaced the dependence on unsafe water sources, reinforcing the importance of investing in adequate infrastructure to guarantee water security in vulnerable communities.

Third, training and capacity building in the community has been a vital aspect of the project. Equipping community members with the knowledge and skills to operate and maintain the system not only ensures its long-term sustainability, but also empowers the community to take control of its own development.

Additionally, the formation of a local water committee has provided the community with an effective structure for water management and has proven to be a valuable model for other indigenous communities. This structure also fosters local responsibility and leadership, crucial factors for the long-term success of any community development project.

Finally, although more time will be needed to fully assess the community health impacts, we expect to see a reduction in the prevalence of waterborne diseases due to improved access to safe drinking water. This impact underscores the direct connection between access to drinking water and public health, and highlights the importance of investment in drinking water infrastructure to improve community health.

In summary, this project has demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of using renewable energy to improve water security in isolated indigenous communities. The lessons learned from this project can inform and inspire future efforts to implement solar powered water supply systems in other communities in the Amazon basin and beyond. The combination of appropriate technology, community training, and local management structures has proven to be a successful approach, and we believe that this model can be replicated and adapted in different contexts to improve access to water and promote sustainability.

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