

Engineers Without Borders – USA

Water Supply Assessment Project

Ambalona, Madagascar



Engineers Without Borders - USA (EWB-USA) is a non-profit humanitarian organization established to partner with developing communities worldwide in order to improve their quality of life. This partnership involves the implementation of sustainable engineering projects, while involving and training internationally responsible engineers and engineering students.

The activities of EWB range from the construction of sustainable systems that developing communities can own and operate without external assistance, to empowering such communities by enhancing local, technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills. These projects are initiated by, and completed with, contributions from the host community working with EWB project teams.

Golder Denver employees are volunteering with EWB – USA to develop a sustainable safe water supply for a rural village in Madagascar. The village of Ambalona (est. pop. 1,500) gets all of its water directly from a river downstream of several other villages or springs that run through rice fields. The poor quality of the water has created many health issues including dysentery and diarrhea which have lead to dehydration and even death especially in children. The women and children of Ambalona spend at least three hours each day collecting water in plastic buckets taking time from other responsibilities and, most importantly, school.

In May 2008, Eric Blumenstein and Adam Hobson traveled to Ambalona, Madagascar on an initial assessment trip. The goals of the trip were to begin assessing the feasibility of water supply from the sustainability perspectives of:

- Environmental
- Economic
- Political
- Cultural



Eric Blumenstein and Adam Hobson (front row L-R) along the Sakave River near Ambalona, Madagascar.



Specifically, the trip had two components: learning about the water resources available to Ambalona and the region, and meeting with local and regional government officials and other non-governmental organizations to establish partnerships and learn about working in the area.

A member of the Ambalona water committee explains the drainage system to Eric Blumenstein (left); Adam Hobson oversees water sample collection (right)



The EWB – USA team was greeted by the village of Ambalona with open arms, minds, and hearts. Upon arrival, the team was greeted by the children of the village with songs about improving their lives through a clean water supply written specifically for this occasion. The team was paraded through the village to meet with village elders who welcomed the team by saying what it honor it was to have them come to their village and provide hope to the people of Ambalona.

The EWB – USA team is honored by the village of Ambalona by parading through the village to meet with village leaders

The people of Ambalona are ready for a sustainable clean water supply but need assistance.

The EWB – USA team is currently evaluating water supply alternatives for Ambalona. A combination site assessment/implementation trip is being planned to test the effectiveness of groundwater wells to provide water to the village. Depending on the effectiveness of the wells, the team expects to install more wells or install a gravity system in a subsequent implementation trip.



How you can help:

Donations are graciously accepted in two ways:

- Visit https://www.ewb-usa.org/project_search.php?op=project&ID=462 to donate online via credit card. Be sure to specify “EWB-Denver, Madagascar project.”
- Send a check, made out to “EWB - USA” with “Denver – Madagascar” in the memo line to:
Tammy Rauen, Madagascar project treasurer
44 Union Boulevard, Suite 300
Lakewood, CO 80228