

Guatemala, May 24th 2017

REPORT IV: Ecological Principles

Introduction. The environmental educational program for teachers at the Guatemalan Caribbean as a key for conservation in rural areas, is a project sponsored by Rufford Foundation. Its main goal is to create replicators of knowledge in rural schools of Izabal, promoting access of environmental education to children and youth, so that they can positively change their attitudes and perceptions about the environment.

On May 22nd and 23rd 2017, the fourth environmental workshop was held in Puerto Barrios and Livingston, Izabal. During these days, the topic of *ecological principles* was presented to teachers. In this workshop teachers learned the concepts of sustainable development, sustainable behaviors, and the importance of applying the ecological principles in five strands: ecological, social, economic, political and psychological.

Furthermore, teachers participate in an activity called *perception line*, that includes a perception evaluation of sixteen declarations and a discussion about everyone's perception. Through this activity, teachers learned how to ask for opinions and how to accept other's perceptions.

At the end of the workshop, teachers sowed some vegetables seed as a representation of the commit they have of sowing the seed of conservation within themselves and their children.



Figure 1. Workshop at Puerto Barrios, Izabal (May, 2017).

Declaration of statements

This activity focused on 16 statements where participants answered according to their perception about the environment. Results show a %76.2 of perception, which means that teachers are more aware about the environment.

After answering the perception evaluation, a discussion activity was held with the teacher. Perception line was made with teachers, where they could share their opinions and learned to listen to other's opinions.

After each statement discussion, teachers could decide whether they stayed at the same position or if they changed their perception.



Figure 2. Teachers of Puerto Barrios at the perception line (May, 2017).

Listening to facts, especially scientific facts, was encourage.

Sowing the seed of Conservation

This activity was held as a representation of how teachers are committed to sow the environmental seed at their schools and communities. The vegetable seed they sowed is going to be transplanted in July, for the workshop of habitat restoration.



Figure 3. Plant pot of teachers at the program. (May, 2017).

Evaluation results

Knowledge evaluations show that only 43% of the teachers in Livingston passed the exam with grades above 80, while teachers of Puerto Barrios showed a 62%. The concept that has to be taught again is “*Ecological Principle*” since they seem not to understand it.

Concept will be taught again in the next workshop.