

TRIP REPORT

APRIL 4 – MAY 4, 2024

On Saturday, May 4th, I returned to the States after an exasperating, busy, rewarding and encouraging month in Honduras. I have been privileged to again work with generous, kind and Christ-centered people.

What follows are the highlights of my month in Honduras. I trust that you will continue to support these varied ministries through the Moravian Board of World Mission. For more information on both Honduran and other ministries with the BWM, check this website: www.moravian.org>mission.

Kuhrpa

Having traveled on April 22nd to Kuhrpa, I spent the whole day on April 23rd in that Patuca River community with Morlin Pérez and Carmen James of Yamnika Laya along with One Atta Time volunteer, Silber Salgado. On what may be my last Patuca River trip for a while, I was privileged to step out of the cayuco to help push it through the drier sections of the river both on the upbound and the downbound trip.

Kuhrpa was the fifth village to receive filters through the project that is jointly supported by the Moravian Board of World Mission, One Atta Time and Yamnika Laya. While Carmen, Morlin and I had arrived the day before, Silber came with the filters and buckets early on April 23rd.

In a process which has become familiar to the project, we recruited villagers to help carry the buckets and boxes of filters from the cayuco in the river, up the steep bank and finally to the Unity Province's Church. There, the stacks of buckets were separated and the filters (assembled the night before by Silber and his team in Krau Sirpi) attached to them. Morlin, Carmen and Silber explained the project, the filters and how to maintain/clean the filters to the assembled village residents. Rojer Cruz, the church leader (and member of the Mission Province's Provincial Board) monitored the list of households created during the census of our previous visit. He called people on the list to come up, receive their filter/bucket, anti-parasite medicine (albendazole) for the family and a Bible.

Again, we experienced problems with the phones and the survey app provided by One Atta Time. Those issues were resolved with a phone call to Fabián (after paying for internet access through one of the local store owners). We also purchased fuel for a portable generator so that the interviewers' phones could be recharged.

Meals were provided by three local churches that took turns bringing food to the church where we were holding the distribution.

A small house near the church was used for medicine distribution, where we administered pediatric albendazole doses that had been purchased with Moravian Disaster Relief funds. Rojer's son, who works as a nurse at the government health center in Wampusirpi, dispensed the meds.

Silber and his companions left around 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon. As the crowds dwindled, Rojer returned to his house. We were surprised that no one had showed up from the nearby community of Ahuas Tingni, but late in the day a man from that village agreed to travel there to bring residents back to Kuhrpa for their filters. I gave him money for gas.

At about 5:45 as it was getting dark and Carmen and Morlin were interviewing the last residents, we started to pack up, thinking that the Ahuas Tingni residents would not be coming that late. (People do not usually travel on the river after sunset.)

Members of the Catholic Church, who had agreed to provide our supper, came around 6 p.m. They had just served the food, when the Ahuas Tingni residents came. We were all surprised at their late arrival, but after finishing supper Morlin and Carmen began the interviews in the dark. Rojer later started the generator again and came back to help out.

At the end of the day, we had handed out all but one of the 220 buckets that Silber had brought.

Our return trip followed an evening of heavy rain. The steep clay bank, which was a challenge to climb two days earlier, was now slick to the point that Carmen, Morlin and I formed a human chain to get our luggage and leftover medicines down to the river's edge. In Wampusirpi, we waited for a three-wheeler to take us to the airstrip, but were back in Puerto Lempira before noon.

Water Filters: The Next Phase of the Blessings Flow/One Atta Time/Yamnika Laya Project

The first phase of the Blessings Flow water filter project was completed on April 24th with our departure from Kuhrpa. Following that trip, Yamnika Laya met to discuss the future of the water filter project. The group confirmed its hope to focus on the northern shore of the Caratasca Lagoon for future distribution trips.

- **Setting.** The Caratasca Lagoon system is the largest lagoon in Honduras and one of the largest in Central America. Historically a center of Mískito culture and population, on its shores are located both the site of the first Honduran Moravian mission established by George and Marguerite Heath in Cauquira in 1930 and the Departmental Capital of Puerto Lempira, created in 1957 on the site of the Mískito village of Auhya Yeri. In that latter year, following a border dispute with Nicaragua, Honduras wanted to strengthen its claim to the territory of La Mosquitia. Thus, were created the Department of Gracias A Dios and its capital in Puerto Lempira. The shores of the lagoon have been home to many indigenous communities since well before the arrival of either the Moravians or the national government. Most of those villages are now home to one or more Moravian congregations and all are in need of potable water.

Only a few hundred yards of sandy soil separate the ocean and lagoon at some places, but the strip of land widens to several miles at the northern terminus near Ujumbila.

Yauhrabila, the area's largest community (with a population of over a thousand) is close to the southeast end of the ribbon of land. The sometimes-treacherous Kitaski Bar -- the only opening between the lagoon and the Caribbean -- is at the southeast tip of the peninsula that will now be the focus of the water project. Between Yauhrabila and Ujumbila, communities range in size from a few dozen homes to others with more than a thousand residents.

- **Transportation** both between the several Caratasca villages and also to and from Puerto Lempira is facilitated by the waters of the lagoon. Traditionally the local Mískito population thought nothing of paddling their wooden dugouts across the Caratasca (often with the help of a sheet for a sail). Today, fiberglass dugouts that function like terrestrial buses, make several daily trips for passengers wanting to visit government offices, the regional hospital or local merchants in Puerto Lempira. Transportation of people, merchandise and materials is a less demanding proposition than is the case for some other locations in La Mosquitia. Even accessibility to the outside world is easier from the lagoon as both Cauquira and Puerto Lempira are capable of receiving ocean going vessels. While the strip of land does not have the conditions necessary for roads, motorcycles in recent years have improved residents' mobility along the peninsula. A "moto" can be paid for transportation to Yauhrabila where the price of a ticket to Puerto Lempira is more economical.
- **Community.** Yamnika Laya will continue to work with local leaders -- teachers, pastors and Kwatmas (elected local officials). Several churches -- Church of God, Moraivan Mission, Moravian Unity, Roman Catholic, Baptist and others -- will help with the water project in the communities where they have a presence.

Yauhrabila has a health center which also serves those nearby communities that do not have any medical care. For more serious medical needs, residents travel to Puerto Lempira's hospital.

- **Fishing.** People in this area often live by fishing, both for personal consumption, but also for profit. Proximity to both the ocean and lagoon means that families have access to a reliable source of maritime protein. Fishing (with poles, but more frequently nets) is usually focused on the lagoon (though one informant said that the fishing is done primarily in the ocean). Fishing is especially profitable during and preceding Lent when Roman Catholics are encouraged to eat fish rather than meat. In nearly every village at that time of year, wooden racks of drying fish can be seen (and smelled), waiting for the arrival of buyers eager to supply the demand in the nation's larger cities. Ready access to seafood is clearly a distinct advantage both for diet and for profit. While residents in other areas struggle to find either gainful employment or access to cash, fishing families enjoy a usually reliable (albeit somewhat seasonable) source of income.

The lagoon and ocean, then, are in many ways advantageous to locals. However, being at or near sea level, residents are particularly susceptible to flooding, winds, storms and

hurricanes. It is not unusual for households to flee across the lagoon to seek higher ground during inclement weather.

Many younger men earn a living by diving for lobster, working on boats that are frequently owned by residents of the Bay Islands off Honduras' North Coast. Lobster diving, while financially attractive to young men and their families, is a particularly dangerous and even lethal occupation. Former divers, disabled by the bends, are present in most area villages.

- **Agriculture.** The lack of fertile soils in which to grow traditional Mískito crops of rice, beans, yucca, etc. further complicates life for residents of the peninsula. The predominance of sandy, nutrient-poor ground means that agriculture is less productive than in other regions. Those who practice the modified slash and burn agriculture so familiar to the Mískito People, must often look for suitable plots on the other side of the lagoon or elsewhere. An exception to this general rule is Ujumbila where lower, more humid and less sandy ground make cultivation of beans – but not rice – possible. Some other crops (e.g., mangos, coconuts, watermelons, plantains and even yucca) can be grown in individual or home garden plots. Mangos and coconuts are often exchanged for rice and beans either in Puerto Lempira or Ahuas.
- **Potable Water.** The Caratasca Peninsula has problems with reliable sources of potable drinking water. Wells that do exist, regularly dry up in April and May during the height of the dry season. The sandy soil that adversely affects agriculture, exacerbates the drinking water shortage. Deep wells cannot be dug because the sandy soils tend to cave in. Typical wells are only four or five feet deep and must be cleaned out or re-excavated on an almost weekly basis as the sand walls collapse. Many villagers construct makeshift well walls from lumber or use metal drums with the ends cut out to prevent cave ins that would otherwise render the wells unusable.
- **Target Villages, Phase Two – One Atta Time/Blessings Flow/Yamnika Laya.** The villages along the northern shore of the Caratasca Lagoon have been identified by Yamnika Laya as the next target for One Atta Time water filter distribution. At its meeting in Puerto Lempira on April 24th, Ujumbila and Puswaia were selected as the next two communities to receive water filters. During visits to these two villages over the next several weeks, Yamnika Laya volunteers will also look into the several other population centers at places like Uji, Krata and even Yauhrabila.

A preliminary census by Moravian leaders in Puswaia showed that the community has less than 150 households. (This number will be confirmed prior to making the filter distribution.)

Ujumbila is also home to about 150 separate households. Smaller barrios located farther away from the town center include an additional 61 homes in Texas, Campo Verde, Yoro, Ibat, Piñal, Waham Tangni and Miramar. (These numbers will also be confirmed prior to filter distribution.)

Most villages on this peninsula are close to the lagoon, ocean or both. Ujumbila is an exception in some ways as it is located near the northwest end of the strip of land where the “isthmus” ends and becomes much wider and muddier (as opposed to sandy). The village itself is about a 30-minute walk from the lagoon landing.

Well Drilling Rig

The Moravian Clinic in Ahuas owns a well drilling rig that was originally purchased and sent to Ahuas by the Moravian Board of World Mission over twenty years ago. It was intended to provide a solution to the chronic dry season water shortages at both the clinic and elsewhere. The well drilling project never really functioned, though several unsuccessful attempts were made at the clinic to drill wells.

With Clinic approval, a five person work crew visited Ahuas in February of this year with the intention of using the rig to drill a well. The goal, in addition to drilling the well, was to make sure that the machine was still in good working order. The clinic had expressed an interest in using the rig both as a ministry and as an income generating project.

There was concern about drilling a well at the clinic itself. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made over the years. At a depth of about 40 or 50 feet, an impenetrable rock layer was reached that prevented further drilling. Speculation suggested that the clinic is sitting on a dome of rock which makes drilling a well away from the clinic a more attractive option. It was decided to drill that test well at the Bible Institute (INBIMO) in Paptalaya.

Under the work crew’s supervision, a well was drilled near the entrance to INBIMO’s property. A PVC hand pump was installed. While the crew did not reach the desired depth of about 200 feet, they considered the well a success. The INBIMO Director, in subsequent conversations, indicated that the well does not produce much water.

The work crew recommended that the rig’s motor/pump be either rebuilt or replaced. A member of the Sturgeon Bay work crew, successfully removed the pump. It was taken to Progreso when the Sturgeon Bay volunteers traveled out of Ahuas. Celán Alemán, the clinic employee who installed and has worked on the clinic’s solar electric system (and on many other electrical and mechanical maintenance projects as well), disassembled the apparatus and is in the process of having it rebuilt. Not only did he confirm the earlier work crew’s observation that gaskets and seals were bad, Celán also found that the motor shaft was so worn that it needed to be replaced.

Sturgeon Bay Moravian Church sent funds to cover the cost of repairing the well drilling rig.

Student House, Moravian Bible Institute (INBIMO)

In February, the North Carolina work crew started construction of a small student housing unit at INBIMO. They ran out of materials and time when they left on February 19th. Members of the crew sent funds to finish the project. Construction should be finished by the end of May.

Battery for Clinic

The well drilling crew that visited Honduras in February “borrowed” the battery from the tractor to use with the well drilling rig. Sturgeon Bay Moravian Church sent \$250 to cover the cost of a new battery for the tractor.

Sturgeon Bay Work Crew

Five persons arrived in Honduras on April 7th and spent the week in Ahuas at the Clínica Evangélica Morava. Team members were recruited from the Sturgeon Bay Moravian Church, the Door County Medical Center and the Bethlehem, PA Moravian congregation.

The group participated in a variety of activities. They assisted with medical procedures – surgeries, outpatients, well baby clinic, infant feeding, inpatient care, births, etc.) and also focused on two maintenance projects. The last wooden inpatient house, known internally as “Blesin watla” was repaired. Old lumber, ceilings and siding were removed from the two-room structure. Working with local carpenters and employees, the crew was able to replace all of the ceiling and most of the siding before they left Ahuas on April 13th. The second project involved painting the exterior of both the OR and the main clinic building. The OR was completely finished, the concrete ramps were painted and most of the single-story part of the main clinic building also received new coats of paint.

The work on the Blesin Watla was far enough along so that when a tragic house fire in Paptalaya (See below.) sent several badly burned patients to the hospital in late April, the newly remodeled structure was used as an “isolation ward” for the most severely injured.

The work crew spent the morning of one day visiting the Ribra River/Auratá Lagoon, helping with the Infant Feeding Program site in Krupunta and dropping off donations for two schools.

In addition to the work done by the volunteers, they also contributed funds to purchase paint and building materials. Those materials, in addition to supporting the painting and Blesin Watla projects, also allowed the clinic to advance the construction of a water tower that, when finished, will supply water to the visitors’ quarters.

Dental Team

Dr. Paul Feit recruited and led a dental group that spent the better part of a week in Honduras. It included two dentists, two dental assistants and a dental hygienist. They saw 125 patients in two villages and removed 175 teeth. During their stay in Ahuas, they started seeing patients at about 8:00 a.m. each day and finished at 5:00 p.m. The team was able to finally utilize the dental equipment that Dr. Feit had donated several years ago, but due to Covid and other scheduling issues had not been tried out.

Dr. Feit, and two assistants also visited the community of Auratá, leaving Ahuas before sunup and returning to the Moravian hospital after dark. In addition to extractions (in spite of challenges with the autoclave and generator), they handed out toothbrushes, gifts and even a soccer ball. The dental clinic was held in the local Catholic Church, with waiting patients seated

on the pews while those being worked on were escorted to two chairs that served as the dental crew's locations. Lunch was squeezed in as the crew ate in the front altar area while additional patients waited.

On the day of the Auratá trip, one dentist and an assistant stayed in Ahuas, utilizing two dental chairs and a separate sterilization station set up temporarily in the physicians' office. By the end of the day, everyone – both those that had stayed in Ahuas and those that had traveled to Auratá, were exhausted. Funds that had already been committed for a planned trip to Barra Patuca were left with the clinic. A visit to that community will be made in May to follow up on the Infant Feeding Program site and to conduct a mobile clinic.

On Dr. Feit's last visit to the Clínica Evangélica Morava in late 2023, he had been made aware of problems with the computers being used by administrative staff. Donations allowed us to purchase three desk top computers, two laptops, a printer and six surge protectors. They were delivered to the clinic and installed during the visit of the dental team.

Vegetables and Home Gardens

The vegetable project which was so successful at the Mission Province's office in Ahuas, continues to produce, with another impressive crop of cucumbers harvested beginning in mid-April. Traditional plantings of yucca and plantains have also done well. As with the bean crop, however, unusually dry weather between late January and mid-April stressed all plantings.

Skills learned at the provincial office's demonstration plot were to be extended to individual home gardens. A generous private donation of barbed wire and gardening tools was combined with another donation of vegetable seeds for some project participants. Again, however, the dry weather experienced in the first weeks of the new year severely limited success.

Additional Crop Damage

In a scene which has become exasperatingly familiar in recent years, much of the recent bean harvest in La Mosquitia was lost. Beans, which the Mískito People generally plant in January, benefit from occasional rain during the early months of the dry season. Too much rain (which usually starts in late May or early June) or too little rain during the January-May dry season limits both plant viability and production. The goal is to plant beans after the cold and wet weather of November/December so that they can benefit from moderate rains early in the year and then be harvested before the heavy rains of late May and early June.

A recurrent theme of conversations while in La Mosquitia over the last month was the partial loss of the bean harvest. We heard the same story as we visited communities on the upper Patuca River, in Ahuas and even in Puerto Lempira: Those who had planted early – in late December or January – had good harvests. By contrast, those who waited until February saw very low production due to the absence of the lighter rains that normally are still falling in January, February and March.

Brother Morlin Pérez, the President of the Moravian Mission Province, had high hopes of repairing one of the main buildings at the provincial office. To fund that project, volunteers cleared three manzanas (about 5.1 acres) with machetes, scattered the seeds and hoped for a harvest of between 60 and 70 one-hundred-pound sacks (quintales) of beans. Unfortunately, their efforts produced only nine quintales – about 15% of the normal yield.

Brother Morlin's experience was not uncommon. Yamnika Laya members, distributing prepackaged food donated by Feed the Hungry and medicines purchased with a Samaritan's Purse grant, were struck by how little some people had to eat in more remote villages. While many still have *bastimentos* (yucca, banana varieties, etc.) and fish that they catch from the ubiquitous water ways, their two main staples – rice and beans – are in very short supply. Can you imagine a typical North American family that had no bread or potatoes? The parallel in La Mosquitia consists of rice and beans.

Sister Erlin James, a member of the Mission Province's Provincial Board recounted the distressing case of an older woman who was caring for six or seven grandchildren. There were no men in the household and after the woman's daughter died, the grandchildren became the responsibility of this woman. Lacking access to a regular source of the dietary staples, the woman was grateful for the food donated by Feed the Hungry and distributed by Moravian leaders. This situation, of course, has much to do with the lack of paternal involvement in most Mískito households, the tragic death of a young mother and the limited ability of an older woman to care for several young children. However, circumstances are made worse by the unpredictability of agriculture in recent years and the loss of the most recent bean crop.

Locals wonder what is causing the repeated crop failures. Hurricanes in 2020, flooding in 2022, October/November flooding last year and excessive drought early in 2024 have all led to crop failures and food shortages. On the Patuca River, in the area around Auka, on the coast from Barra Patuca to Batalla, forests – some of them in the supposedly protected Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve – have been indiscriminately felled to make room for cattle ranches created by non Mískito “invaders” from the west of the country. Further upriver, the Patuca III hydroelectric project was to provide a partial answer to the country's energy deficit. Downriver farmers, however, say that it has significantly reduced the flow of water. Climate change has led to cold storm fronts in the months of January and February at a time when the dry season traditionally creates oppressive heat. Extreme drought in January, February and March was previously unheard of. Alternate periods of unpredictable heavy rains and drought create an environment in which humble agriculturalists are no longer sure when they should be planting to take advantage of nutrient rich flooding and when they should expect potentially lethal rounds of dry weather.

The Mískito People are again suffering from the loss of yet one more harvest. The unpredictable periods of drought and floods have become a reality for Eastern Honduran ethnic groups. Whether these are caused by climate change, Patuca III or destruction of virgin forests, may be subject to debate. What is not open to discussion, however, is that good people who live by modified slash and burn agriculture are suffering. We may be tired of hearing yet one more story of hunger and the request for yet another lot of humanitarian aid, but the Mískito People of

Gracias a Dios, are equally distressed and threatened by a shortage of food that comes through no fault of their own.

Irrigation Project, Ahuas High School (Instituto Polivalente Samuel B. Marx)

On Friday, April 26th, I met with Profesor Edwin Haylock at the high school, Instituto Polivalente Samuel B. Marx. He used his "moto" to take me to the several projects that he is working on both at the school and also at a World Bank funded egg laying project with 350 hens. I continue to be impressed by Edwin's knowledge, vision and passion. In addition to the vegetable project, they have planted plantains, corn, mahogany and cashews. He wants to teach the students, but at the same time share his knowledge and techniques with the community. His hope to change and improve agricultural practices in many ways mirrors some of the conversations that we have had with Moravian leaders.

An irrigation project would deepen the existing well, hand digging now during the height of the dry season. (Well digging in this area is usually done in April and May, the driest time of the year. If wells are dug during the rainy season, they quickly fill with water and cannot reach the 20-25 foot depth that is "normal" for this area. Well digging during wetter months also puts workers at risk of cave ins.)

In addition, the existing concrete frame that was to be a water tower, will be raised to a height of about 20 feet. A large Rotoplas water tank will sit on top of that tower. The hope is to have an electric pump move water from the well to the tank. From there, water will flow by gravity to a one manzana (about 1.7 acre) vegetable growing site near the tower. Plastic tubing and PVC piping will move the water to the cultivated manzana.

Edwin has broader visions for the irrigation system that could eventually supply water to other ag. projects of the school. He would like to start with the vegetable project.

Government funding to support infrastructure improvements has been promised for over a year, but has not yet been seen. The fact that 2025 is an election year might motivate the current administration to do something with the school. However, Edwin says that the budget proposed by the Ministry of Education does not include funds for irrigation.

Donations were sent through the Moravian Board of World Mission in early April to start this project.

Cacao

After several months of communication with Evangelina Trejo Sosa of the Liaison Office of the National University in La Ceiba (CURLA, or Centro Universitario Regional del Litoral Atlántico), she informed us that there were two scholarship opportunities for students of indigenous groups to study cacao farming. Those scholarships were offered by RIKOLTO, which according to its website, is *“an international NGO with more than 40 years of experience in transforming value chains, strengthening small-scale farmer organizations and food chain actors in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.”*

The Mission Province and the Unity Province both sent candidates to begin the one-month intensive diploma course on April 8th. Just as the students were traveling to La Ceiba to start the course, Evangelina let us know that there was room for two more scholarship students. One selected by the Mission Province was rejected because of his age, but the Unity Province was able to send another who started classes just two days after the course began. A graduation ceremony was held on May 3rd, with the Miskito students returning to Ahuas and Puerto Lempira on May 5th.

The last day of the educational experience was spent at Chocolate Halba, a cacao exporter with European ties in San Pedro Sula. The students are all very excited to put their new-found knowledge and experiences to work in La Mosquitia with the cacao projects of the two provinces. It would be good if the three students could promote interprovincial cooperation for the two projects and also further the larger goal of training individual small producers in La Mosquitia. The good relationship established with CURLA could provide future opportunities for cooperation (not only with cacao and agriculture, but also with the clinic and nursing).

New House Construction – Fire, Paptalaya

During the night of April 17, 2024, as the large Allen Balderramos family was holding a wake for a daughter that had died of cancer, a major fire broke out. The wood frame house had been built over twenty years ago and although the cause of the blaze is unknown, witnesses reported that it was soon completely engulfed. The Moravian hospital in Ahuas treated fifteen burn victims. One child died in the flames and another the next day after being transferred to Tegucigalpa. A day later two additional children were sent to Tegucigalpa for specialized treatment. The family considered the tragedy to be a message from God. It was felt that the almost completely destroyed structure should not be rebuilt as it would bring bad luck. Rather than trying to rebuild, they decided to live – at least for the time being – in the separate structure that had previously functioned as the family kitchen.

The family, with support from the community (and especially local schoolteachers) collected money for immediate support. A nephew of the family matriarch is coordinating efforts to build a new home. He has provided a construction budget and a house plan.

A building supervisor has yet to be hired, but the family feels that it can do most of the work, needing professional help only for the concrete posts that will support the structure.

The plan is to build a wood frame home measuring 20 feet wide by 28 feet deep. It will include two bedrooms, a combination living/dining room, a hallway and a porch. Living quarters will rest on concrete posts about eight feet high.

The budget has been calculated as follows:

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| Local Materials (lumber, sand and gravel) | L 70,946 |
| Manufactured materials to be purchased | L 59,321 |
| Builder Fee | L 10,000 |

L 140,267 (= About \$5,678)

Donations from the dental crew, Sturgeon Bay Moravian and the Moravian Board of World Mission total about \$2,800. Additional support can be sent to the Moravian Board of World Mission, clearly marked for “Paptalaya Fire”.

Bibles

On the water filter distribution trip to Kuhrpa, Brother Silber Salgado brought along 250 Spanish Bibles donated by the Assemblies of God. A majority of those Bibles were given out along with water filters and medicines in Kuhrpa, but some extras were sent to Ahuas for future distribution with other water filter community visits.

In the 1980s and 1990s Central American and North American Moravians (e.g., Joe Gray, Silvio Díaz, Wincap Cassy and others) worked with other denominations to finally create a translation of the entire Bible into Mískito. Moravians were a key financial supporter of that project.

In mid-April, the representative of the United Bible Societies in San Pedro indicated that they do not have Mískito Bibles, but suggested that the best way to get them is to purchase them from the Nicaraguan office of the United Bible Societies. The country director of the United Bible Societies in Tegucigalpa confirmed this situation. His voicemail response again suggested that we contact Nicaragua because Honduras has no Mískito Bibles and is not currently contemplating any special projects.

If you are interested in supporting efforts to purchase Mískito language Bibles for distribution in La Mosquitia, you can send contributions to the Moravian Board of World Mission.

Feed the Hungry

Feed the Hungry has been cooperating with Honduran Moravians since 2019. Several containers of food have been sent to Moravian leaders following natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes in 2020, floods in 2022 and further flooding in 2023). The organization has also worked directly through Moravian pastors in Ahuas, Brus Laguna and Puerto Lempira to provide more regular meals to children. In all cases, the Moravians have helped to get food to people – not only Moravians – in need. The Board of World Mission, using Moravian Disaster Relief funds has assisted with shipping costs.

In a meeting with Carlos Saavedra, the Honduras Country Director for Feed the Hungry, the possibility of a more permanent partnership was discussed. With adequate funding, shipments could be made every three months. Honduran Moravians would help to coordinate the delivery of food to churches and schools throughout La Mosquitia. At the same time, the Honduran Moravian leadership would ensure that Bible stories, prayers and scriptures are shared with the children. The goal would be to create permanent feeding stations where children would receive both physical and spiritual nourishment.

If you are interested in supporting efforts to distribute food throughout the region, you can send contributions to the Moravian Board of World Mission.

Convoy of Hope

Convoy of Hope visited La Mosquitia at our invitation in late 2023. We hoped that we might combine efforts to supply food to nutrition sites at area churches. Recent communications with Convoy indicated that they are hoping to send 20,000 pounds of prepackaged/donated food to La Mosquitia using the Honduran Navy. That shipment will hopefully occur sometime after May 20th. Delays in this project have generated skepticism among Honduran Moravian leaders.

Samaritan's Purse

Moravians and Samaritan's Purse have worked cooperatively in La Mosquitia since 2020. Samaritan's Purse has financially supported Moravian relief efforts associated with hurricanes and flooding over the past four years.

The organization responded to our latest request by approving a grant of \$25,000 – half of which was to be used to purchase seeds, and the other half to purchase and distribute medicines. Medicines were purchased in March and sent to La Mosquitia for distribution with the prepackaged meals donated by Feed the Hungry. Members of the Unity Province's Provincial Board packed the meds into small bags to be given to individual families. Medicines are particularly sought after in some of the more remote communities where doctors, nurses and pharmacies do not exist. Our individual bags included vitamins, pain meds, antibiotics and anti-parasitics. The last of those medicines were given out at the end of April.

Seeds have been a more problematic commodity. When first requested at the end of 2023, we had hoped that bean seeds would be available for planting by late December or January – the traditional planting season for beans in La Mosquitia. Bad weather delayed shipping and Samaritan's Purse agreed to instead support the purchase of rice seeds for planting in late May/early June. We were initially disappointed by the scarcity of seeds, but finally learned that they were available at BAPROSA in Progreso. Arrangements were made to purchase 125 one-hundred-pound sacks of seeds at \$73.18 each, with half of them being sent to Ahuas for distribution by the Mission Province and the other half going to Puerto Lempira where the Unity Province would see to it that they reached the hands of people in need. Seeds arrived in Ahuas on May 5th for distribution by the Mission Province in the western portions of La Mosquitia. On May 13th, the other half of the seeds got to Puerto Lempira. They will be distributed by the Unity Province in the eastern part of the region.