Statement of Need for HVO Wastewater Treatment System

Albert Einstein once said, “We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

At HCJB Global Hands, the purpose of the department of community development is to “provide preventive and curative healthcare for rural people who could not easily take advantage of HCJB hospitals.” HCJB’s Clean Water Projects division is “committed to improving the health of rural communities through clean water and preventative health. We are also committed to Biblical values and community development principles.”

As agents of renewal in this world and as image-bearers of Christ, HCJB has a responsibility to utilize the most ethically and morally responsible practices available to them, not only within the walls of the hospital, but also with what exits through its pipes. HCJB must not claim to promote good hygiene and sanitation practices while participating in some of the very activities that it condemns. Otherwise they are essentially contributing to the problem and perpetuating the reality of unsafe drinking water.

Passing along improperly treated wastewater to downstream peoples and cities is not only environmentally and ethically questionable, but also morally. Not to mention that it is a contradictory, short-sighted and self-destructive practice.

Although in general Ecuador remains in the dark ages of wastewater treatment, it is important that the hospital not send the message that they are conforming to these “typical” standards. But rather that they send the message that they use higher standards as they answer to a higher Power who is above any country’s lax regulation policies. The hospital should seek to send a message of respect for the environment and for the health and wellbeing of not only those communities and people who the hospital serves, but of those communities downstream of the hospital.

As a modern municipal wastewater treatment facility is years away, attaching to the municipality’s sewer line would not only be an environmental and ethical compromise, but a moral one. It is therefore recommended that the hospital augment their current system with an additional septic tank, dosing tank and drainfield.