Learning How to Do Anthropology in Central Costa Rica

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Introduction

- Initial Fair Trade Cooperative Interest
- Challenge to alter research
- Community members interested in social change
Study Site and Population

- Llano Bonito
- 40 miles south of San Jose
- 2,200 inhabitants
- 85% of population coffee farmers (INEC 2010)
Methodology

- Participant Observation
- Questionnaire
- Focus Group
- Semi-structured Interviews
Results - Participant Observation

- Coopellanobonito R.L.
- Coffee Farm
- Proal
- Angel y Mujer
- Cooperative Events
- Various Community Meetings
Results - Questionnaire

• Ineffective method for this project
• “A lack of commitment”
Results - Focus Group

- Focus Group: English Class
- Interview activity with 12 high school students of the 11th grade
Results - Focus Group

• Do you go to church on Sundays?
• Do you watch more than 2 hours of TV per day?
• Is soccer your favorite sport?
• Are you a Saprissista?
• Do you like to learn in school?
• Would you like to study at a university?
• Would you like to work with coffee?
Results - Interview

- Associated with coffee farming
- Member of community group
- Family roles
Discussion - Urbanization

• High school students want to leave the community
• Conversations with parents

“Depending on the career that they are looking for, they have to leave.” - Maria
Discussion - Urbanization

WHY?

- Access to educational opportunities
- Increased family income
- Nature of farm work
Discussion - Individualism

- Then
  “The community was very united, everyone helped each other mutually.” -Doña Isabela 64

- Now
  “I am interested in my life without worrying about anyone else.” -Ericka 29
Discussion - Individualism

WHY?

• Product of modernization (Robertson & Lechner 1985)

• Individualism increases due to higher income (Basabe & Ros 2005)
Conclusion

• Are the perceptions different now after recent changes?
Thank You