



Media Contacts:

Rodney D Bell
Rodney@Cholaca.com
303-807-3397

**Colorado-based Cholaca Raises \$7,958 for Indigenous Cacao Farmers
Rebuilding after Ecuador Earthquake**

Supported by other businesses and individuals, funds cover cost of filters and eco-friendly compost toilets that meet community's need for clean water and sanitation

DENVER – August 3, 2016 – A necessity of life and safeguard against disease completes the first rebuilding phase for the 1,500 residents of Canalon, Ecuador, part of the Esmerelda Province. The rural community's farming co-operative is a sustainable sourcing partner for [Boulder-based Cholaca](#), a small natural food and beverage company curating pure cacao products. As of August 3, Cholaca and other Colorado businesses and individuals had raised and disbursed \$7,958.

The first priority was to restore basic sanitation and ensure potable water. Funds raised helped purchase materials needed to build 20 composting toilets, and to provide grey and potable water filtration systems (*see photo with captions*). Longer-term reconstruction will build new homes and repair houses needing roof and foundation replacement.

The disaster was the latest struggle to protect a way of life and the rainforest on which the regenerative agriculture local economy depends. Farmers like Olkin Olivero and his family (*see photo with captions*) feel more confident about their future because of this Colorado connection through Cholaca.

Resilience Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit (EIN 46-2608660), is financing the rebuilding effort in Esmerelda Province. Working with [Terra Genesis International](#), a non-governmental organization, Cholaca wants to rebuild and repair 60 homes. The 7.8 magnitude April 9 quake destroyed 20 houses, severely damaged 20 more, and left another 20 dwellings needing repair to make habitable again.

Individuals can still donate online at <https://igg.me/at/zm-ohzatNis>. Contributions came from Colorado and other states, including a major kick-off donation from Thomas Dooley, Founder, CEO and Executive Creative Director of TDA Advertising in Boulder. Another early donor was California-based The Philosopher's Stoneground Regenerative Nut Butters.

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info@cholaca.com
www.cholaca.com



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“Fort Collins Brewery first collaborated with Cholaca a few months back when we used their 100 percent pure liquid cacao in our Mexican Chocolate Cake Stout,” said Chea Franz, Marketing, PR and Brand Manager. “When we heard that Cholaca was spearheading this fundraising effort, we wanted to help. We quickly organized a community pint night in which a portion of proceeds went towards rebuilding efforts in Ecuador. At the end of the day, a little help goes a long way.”

“We thank Coloradans and others for helping us to build a better future and protect our land,” said Olkin Olivero on behalf of his Canalon neighbors.

“The benefits of protecting natural resources should also profit those who responsibly make a living from the land,” said Cholaca CEO Ira Leibtag.

Said Gregory Landua, Terra Genesis International CEO, “The people are doing much of the work to save money.” Cholaca’s cacao suppliers belong to two local farming co-operatives, Eco-Cacao and UOPROCAE, which distribute profits among their members. Cholaca collaborates with Terra Genesis in supporting local development. Before the earthquake, Cholaca also had started lining up investors to purchase land for a future cacao processing facility that will create local jobs.

Cholaca’s indigenous partners produce some of the [finest cacao in the world](#) in the world. Deforestation and unsustainable farming threaten the world’s chocolate supply. Cacao grows beneath the natural canopy alongside bananas and other crops. Cholaca provides a video tour of the community on its web site: [“Preventing Deforestation from Chocolate”](#).

Business continues to grow for Cholaca and the cacao farmer co-ops. The company recently completed an agreement with Sprouts Farmers Market. All 30 Sprouts across the state will soon retail 12-ounce liquid Cholaca. Currently Natural Grocers, Whole Foods Markets, Alfalfa’s and Lucky’s Markets throughout Colorado [retail Cholaca](#) in [three varieties, unsweetened, original and sweetened](#). Coffee shops and craft brewers offer Cholaca espresso drinks or add liquid Cholaca to chocolate infused brews. Cholaca’s newest product is solid baking wafers, a purer ingredient for commercial and home baking.

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Images available:

Composting Toilet Image #1: Built entirely of local bamboo and donated cement, composting toilets provide a clean and healthy way to deal with the challenges of sanitation. They are also models of sustainable building techniques.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/vhaegsmrve0j4jl/composting%20toilet-1.jpeg?dl=0>

Composting Toilet Image #2: The Cholaca team adds the final touch, steps. Earthquake victims now have a safe, sanitary and odor free composting toilet facility.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/rmeyikcxmxz550g/composting%20toilet-2.jpeg?dl=0>

Olkin Olivero Image #3: Cacao farmer and Canalon resident Olkin Olivero outside his earthquake damaged home.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/6cz1lu072a75zn0/Earthquake%20Rebuild_Olkin%20Olivero.jpg?dl=0

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About Cacao and Cholaca: Cacao is one of the planet's most nutrient-rich foods. Rich in antioxidants and flavonoids, Cacao has more iron and magnesium than any other food. Cholaca transforms pure, unadulterated cacao into a decadent and [good for you](#) chocolate beverage. All organic Cholaca contains only three natural ingredients: pure cacao, coconut sugar and water (unsweetened Cholaca has only pure cacao and water). Cholaca provides a jitter-free alternative to caffeinated drinks. Theobromine, a natural stimulant in cacao, gives people a positive, elevated energy and alertness. Vegan, gluten-free and pasteurized, Cholaca contains no preservatives or emulsifiers. Find out more at [Facebook.com/Cholaca](https://www.facebook.com/Cholaca), [Instagram.com/Cholaca](https://www.instagram.com/Cholaca), and twitter.com/Cholaca.

About the company: [Boulder-based Cholaca](#) was founded in 2012 by Ira Leibtag with a desire to bring healthy, organic cacao, in its purest form, to the masses while curating strong partnerships with the indigenous farmers of Peru and Ecuador. Cholaca and its partners promote regenerative agriculture practices, which protect the rainforests and ensure a long-term supply of chocolate, both of which are under threat. Cholaca has many uses, as an alternative to caffeinated coffee or tea, as a mixer for chocolate infused warm and cold drinks, and as a home or commercial baking ingredient in the form of solid wafers.



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