

RESILIENCE

A Publication of Project Harvest

Winter 2017-2018



Climate Change and Dry Season Adaptation

Project Harvest is committed to making the best use of all its resources. Therefore when dealing with the cost of rainwater catchment systems, Project Harvest carefully assessed the most popular systems available in the marketplace, versus its own designed model known in Spanish by its acronym "SCAL" which in English translates to RWHS (Rain Water Harvesting System).

A study was done to determine which models are the most economical and efficient; a ready-made model purchased from a dealer or our own SCAL.

A SCAL consists of a reservoir to hold the water, a corrugated metal roof to collect the water, and eaves troughs to direct the water into the reservoir. The tank or reservoir's dimensions measure D3.75 X H1.5 meters, and holds 16,000 liters of water. The cost of constructing a SCAL is: \$900 (materials: \$800+\$100 for in kind labor).

On the other hand, the cost of purchasing a ready-made water tank of 2,500 liters of the most popular

brand in Guatemala would cost \$433.

Thus the cost for harvesting and storing a liter of water using our own system or SCAL is \$0.05 cents per liter; while the cost of a liter of water using a popular market system would come to \$0.17 cents per liter. This is not taking into account the cost of a corrugated metal roof and wooden posts at the cost of \$400.

Thus Project Harvest captures water for less than one third the cost of the popular market systems (or one sixth the cost when a roof is added to the popular brand).

The added benefits are that our SCALs are built in each of the patios of the families with whom we work. This model allows the family to participate in its construction while at the same time learning a new skill. This knowledge is important not only to build and own their very own system, but also for future use either for themselves or to help other families to do the same. This is also, then, community building.

PROJECT HARVEST - GUATEMALA

EMPOWERING RURAL SUBSISTENCE FARMERS

E-mail: project.harvest.guatemala@gmail.com Website: projectharvest.org

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Letter from the Coordinator and Chair

Dear Friends and Supporters

Can we tell you why and how this is a year of "firsts" for Project Harvest?

As we write this letter the first delegation to visit the communities where Project Harvest works is preparing to leave for Guatemala. The delegates pay their own way in order to be part of this "first" Educational **Solidarity Tour**. The delegates will then be available to make a presentation on what they have learnt when they return (please contact us to discuss a presentation).

Another "first" is an "**Encuentro de Comundades**" or (Encounter of Communities) or gathering of representatives of the ten communities where Project Harvest works. It will provide a space for the leaders who have been in formation for the last few years, to come together to speak to one another of their aspirations and to discuss their vision of how they can collaborate in the future.

The third "first" is starting the process of developing a **Five Year Strategic Plan**. Project Harvest has in the last few years grown in terms of refining its unique model of work (see article in newsletter insert) and has expanded into new communities. The time has come to look to the



future and to deliberately determine where we want to be in five years; and to ascertain which resources are needed to get there. We look forward to developing this plan and we are excited about future possibilities.

Meanwhile in mid-2017, we have heeded the call from another community called **Chuachituj**. It is the first time in many years we have expanded into a community in the Totonicapán area of Guatemala. Although the needs are great everywhere, the women of this community have seen our work in a neighbouring village, and have requested our support to have family size vegetable gardens of their own.

Friends, it is with your support that we are able to deepen and extend our work to address the immediate and long term wellbeing of the campesino families with whom we work. We could not do it without you, our donors and potential donors, whether you contribute monthly or once a year. Please know that Project Harvest makes every dollar count and every dollar is appreciated.

Sincerely

Paul Lemieux

General Coordinator

Barbara Bishop

Chair of Board



The Human Right to Food – Exploring Some of the Myths

Myth 1: too little food, too many people

Food scarcity is not the problem, but the scarcity of real democracy protecting people's access to nutritious food is a huge problem. Fighting hunger means tackling concentrated political and economic power.

Myth 2: climate change makes hunger inevitable

While climate disruption is now inevitable, vulnerability is largely under human control. Fortunately, changes in food and farming that best address climate change are precisely those that most benefit the world's hungry people, the environment, and everyone's health.

Source: foodfirst.org



A day in the life of Yolanda

Yolanda is a resident of Oquen, a community located in the dry corridor of Comotan in Chiquimula. She is a very hardworking woman and always takes part in community activities. Although Yolanda is only 34 years old, she has lived a lifetime. She married quite young to Manuel and has 7 children - 4 girls, and 3 boys. Before her last pregnancy she would make jokes that 6 children were enough because 3 girls and 3 boys made three pairs but in her community there is a stigma against the use of family planning methods and now Yolanda has another girl to care for.

For Yolanda there is no such thing as a holiday, or a day off, or a day to herself. She gets up every day before sunrise at 4:30 in the morning from Monday to Sunday. The first things she does are to light the fire, grind the corn and make tortillas and coffee. This will be breakfast for the whole family, all done while they sleep. Yolanda can be seen, baby on her back, going to fetch water at the well. She is accompanied by one of her oldest daughters who is carrying the washing and the containers for water. To fetch water, they must walk for two hours over the dry, hilly land of her community. She walks quickly. It is as if her feet do not touch the ground. When she arrives at the well, she joins other women who form a line and take their turn at the well. There are many women and little water. They spend the morning in



Caring for children is one of many tasks.

this way. She arrives back home by noon where she makes lunch for Manuel and the children who have returned from school.

In the afternoon, Yolanda continues with her chores, cleaning house, washing dishes, gathering wood, watering and looking after the garden, preparing corn and nixtamal, and making sure that the children do their studies, even though she herself has only a grade three education. Yolanda is the one who is responsible for feeding, caring for, keeping everyone and everything clean and watching over the education of her family. When her husband Manuel comes home, Yolanda must tell him what has gone on during the day, and then prepares supper.

By nighttime Yolanda is still not able to sit down to rest, for she must take the time to do her weaving in order to contribute to the family economy. It takes 3 or 4 days to make a hammock which she can then sell for \$1.50. At ten o'clock at night, Yolanda lies down to sleep, knowing that at any moment she may be awakened by one of her children needing her care. After 17 hours of continuous work, she might get six hours of sleep. She is always alert for the needs of others.

Yolanda's story is the story of the struggle and hard work of many peasant and Indigenous women in Guatemala. This work is not generally valued or appreciated even though it is what maintains the peasant economy.



A woman making tamales for the evening meal.

Project Harvest - Guatemala / Financial Statement 2016	
ASSETS, REVENUES & EXPENSES	Totals 2016
ASSETS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	
Assets at beginning of the year in Canada (1/1/16)	38,005.17
Assets at beginning of the year in Guatemala (1/1/16)	26,116.46
Total ASSETS at beginning of the year	64,121.63
REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR	
Donations from Individuals	48,080.00
Donations from Institutions	21,852.00
MCC Grant for Regular Program	37,336.24
MCC Grant for Emergency Program	29,612.76
Rotary Club Grant for Regular Program	106,262.59
TOTAL REVENUES for fiscal year	243,143.59
EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR	
Program expenses in Guatemala	47,696.86
Administration in Guatemala & Canada	4,274.21
Fundraising in Canada	735.56
MCC Regular Program	11,843.52
MCC Emergency Program	48,919.51
Rotary Club Regular Program	79,605.45
Total Expenses for fiscal year	193,075.11
Excess of revenues over expenses for fiscal year	50,068.48
ASSETS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	
Assets at the end of the year in Canada (12/31/16)	55,372.82
Assets at the end of the year in Guatemala (12/31/16)	58,817.29
Total ASSETS* at the end of the year	114,190.11
* Represents start up funds for next calendar year.	

Please Donate!



Online at: projectharvest.org

Or **Project Harvest-Guatemala**
by Mail: 17 Pancake Lane, Fonthill,
Ontario, Canada L0S 1E2



Thank you for supporting our work!

We would like to sincerely thank you for your ongoing and steady support without which none of Project Harvest's achievements would be possible.

We must also thank our Guatemalan team members who continue to inspire our mission through their commitment & courage and who at times work under difficult conditions.



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projectharvest.org



E-mail us at:
project.harvest.guatemala@gmail.com

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Media

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Donate

*New members of the Board of
Directors and Guatemalan Team*



Leslie Coyoy is head of accounting and legal matters of Project Harvest in Guatemala. She is a young, enthusiastic woman now finishing her Bachelor's Degree in Auditing at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala.



Andrea Kelly, a retired teacher, spent several years as a social justice activist focusing on Latin American issues. Recently re-retired from innkeeping, she is looking forward to being part of the Project Harvest team.

PROJECT HARVEST— Guatemala

VISION

- ① A WORLD FREE FROM HUNGER.
- ① A WORLD WHERE THE HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD IS ABSOLUTE AND UNCONDITIONAL;
- ① A WORLD WHERE EVERY CHILD, WOMAN AND MAN CAN FULLY ACCESS ADEQUATE, NUTRITIOUS AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD.



1.4 million liters
rain water
harvested



57 pounds
vegetable seeds
distributed



75
agricultural
workshops

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121 tons
of food
produced



165,000 pounds
fertilizer
distributed



12 actions
by women's
organizations

Mission

- ① TO EMPOWER EXCLUDED, SUBSISTENCE FARMING FAMILIES
- ① TO IMPROVE THEIR FOOD SECURITY BY PRODUCING HIGH QUALITY FOOD
- ① TO STRENGTHEN THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS OF THEIR RIGHTS.

Project Harvest: Our Unique Model of Work



Rural development has many dimensions: a productive economy, a healthy social and cultural life, and a sustainable environment. Project Harvest distinguishes itself as an organization which focuses on a two specific strategies and concentrates on doing them well. We are committed to improve the wellbeing of rural subsistence farmers, very often women, their families and their communities.

Project Harvest contributes to participants' wellbeing by teaching families how to grow vegetable gardens in both the rainy and the dry seasons; and by fostering community organization. We teach the families how to grow vegetables in the winter season as well as in the summer. In the summer, we rely on the storage of rainwater collected during the rainy season. We help the families acquire the necessary knowledge and organizational skills which can help them to become better able to obtain their right to food when addressing rural development with the State of Guatemala.

Project Harvest expresses its goals in three phases: short, medium and long term. In the short term, our work involves helping alleviate food shortages, emphasizing overall nutrition, and reducing chronic child malnutrition. Our method involves the production of fresh, wholesome vegetables as well as rainwater catchment systems.

Simultaneously, we work toward the improvement of the social organization through specialized training. We

deal with complex issues which nurture the critical thinking capacity of participants. Project Harvest has begun a formation program on themes such as self-esteem, the ability to organize, citizen participation, the rights of women and their communities, as well as their basic human rights as citizens of Guatemala.

In the medium term we promote a better understanding of food production, not only for home consumption, but also for selling any surplus in the marketplace. This provides income for families to purchase school supplies or for items not grown in local gardens. At the level of training, we continue with various workshops to train community leaders who then organize themselves into groups, with a board chosen from the membership. As the community develops it is able to manage community based projects to meet their specific needs. Examples are talks on reproductive health, community leadership, and gender equity.

In the long term our goal is to work together to continually improve the level of production of family gardens and to ensure that the consumption of vegetables and nutrients will be sufficient to reduce levels of malnutrition. Formation and organization leads to well trained, capable leaders in local self-management elevating the whole community, which then becomes capable of working together to lobby for their rights in the areas of food, health, housing, citizenship, indeed their entire wellbeing.

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