

Thank you very much for your question concerning waste water management at our REP schools.

Questions:

1) Does the Ripple Effect Program address the issues of waste water(grey and sewage) management?

Yes, the Ripple Effect Program is very active in addressing waste water issues and having a school parent committee in place at each school who is responsible for the maintenance of the school's washrooms, among other things. This is also a requirement of the Guatemalan Ministry of Education.

2) Do you know the status of waste water management in conjunction with the school program?

The waste water (grey and sewage) is dealt with in a number of different ways depending on if it's at a rural or urban school.

i) in rural schools, the most common is the septic tank and a disposal pit (similar to our septic field). Some schools have a septic tank that is pumped out by the municipality.

ii) biodigester systems became popular around 2012 and most new school projects have this system. This is the system recommended by most municipalities. The people responsible for the operating and maintenance of this system are well trained.

iii) urban schools are directly connected to the Municipal water and sewage system. In order to ensure the sustainability of all these systems and maintenance of the washroom facilities, the Parent Committee or Water Committee at every school is responsible to ensure the facilities are clean and well maintained, as well as ensuring an adequate supply of soap and toilet paper. The Ministry of Education sends funds to the parent committee to pay for the supplies. A schedule is drafted which identifies the grade and teacher responsible for cleaning, or in some schools they have cleaning staff, usually paid for by the municipality.

The REP in recent years is doing more WASH (water, sanitation, health and hygiene) Global Grants. We are just completing a WASH in 24 schools GG (\$317,000 US) involving building or improving infrastructure, septic systems, clean water, and extensive Health and Hygiene training component for the Parent Committee, teachers, and students, which includes maintaining all the equipment.

The planning of WASH Global Grant in 8 schools is in the draft stage now. Alianza Joven is a non-profit Guatemalan Association, made up of Rotarians and Guatemalan Entrepreneurs who do the majority of training for students, teachers, parents and Parent Committee in WASH GG's. The training is a requirement of R.I.

The REP requires clubs in Guatemala to submit an Annual School Report for all their REP schools built or refurbished within in the last 10 years. One component addresses waste water management and washrooms.

Also, Deb and Gord travel to Guatemala every year (except during Covid) and submit a Project Monitoring Report of all the schools (up to 35 schools) we visit. At this time issues and any deficiencies are noted and corrected.

3) Is it being addressed by other donor programs or local authorities.

The government has regulations in place regarding the disposal of sewage and waste water. The Ripple Effect also ensures that any construction we do is not permitted within 30 metres of a water body such as a stream, creek, river, etc.

The Municipalities and Ministry of Education are the local authorities in the villages and cities where REP operates. A partner meeting is held with the Mayor to review the project and the Municipality often provides materials or labour for the project. The Minister of Education is represented by an area Superintendent who oversees many schools and is included in the planning and implementation of the project.

Rotary in the USA and Canada are the international partners in many WASH Global Grants every year. Other NGO's are often partners. Rotary International must approve all planning for Global Grants, and the installation of washrooms and their systems.

If you have any further questions, please let us know.

Thank you again for your questions and interest in the Ripple Effect Program.

Have a great day!!

Regards

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