

SAN RAFAEL CHICHOP GUATEMALA DRINKING WATER PROJECT

FUNDING APPEAL FOR GLOBAL GRANT 2696457

San Rafael Chichop, a community of 1,500 residents located in the Highlands of Guatemala north of Joyabaj, has asked Rotary to assist in constructing a water system. Current immigration policies of the US have meant the return of many Guatemalans to the area with fifteen new homes being added to the 245 existing. Many families now use seasonal rainwater collection, purchase water every one or two weeks at a cost of Q50 per barrel or pay for a 40-minute vehicle trip to collect water from a spring in the valley. Change in climate patterns has resulted in shorter rainy seasons and highly variable crop yields.

San Rafael Chichop was originally part of a large farm owned by a Spanish landowner. Locals could legally purchase property beginning in the 1960's and since then, the community has been able to establish their own schools. Most of the population speak Maya K'iche', approximately 75% of the population is literate and there are high school and university graduates. The community has one catholic and two evangelical churches, schools, and a multipurpose hall.

Rotary members from the in-country Vista Hermosa Rotary Club, Milwaukee, Elmbrook, the ERC Satellite Rotary Clubs, and staff from Ingenieros sin Fronteras-GT visited the community in April 2026. They conducted interviews of the community President, the COCODE (Council), and eight representatives of the community. The community's objective is to guarantee equitable access to water resources so that all homes, schools, churches, businesses and the public market will have access to clean water. However, they lack sufficient financial resources to deliver the project.

This project will install a pump in a newly installed well provided by the municipality, a conduction line, a concrete water distribution tank, chlorinator, distribution lines to each home, and taps with water meters. A solar system component will reduce the cost of electric power required to operate the system. Marquette University Engineers Without Borders (EWB) students have agreed to design the new system and the community has agreed to provide volunteer labor and to pay a monthly charge for use. Training in sanitation, maintenance and billing systems will be provided. Weekly USA/GT project meetings will ensure timely resolution of any construction issues.



"Transforming communities in a sustainable way"

This is an excellent opportunity to participate in an international project in conjunction with a proven collaborative network. The \$323,000 project will require a Rotary contribution of \$189,000 after investments by the municipality, the community and Marquette University EWB.

If you would like additional information, please contact Jim Cantrill of the Marquette Harbor MI RC @ jcantril@nmu.edu (906) 869-1257, or Jerry Stepaniak of RC Milwaukee @ jerrystepaniak@gmail.com (414) 745-7744.