

XONCA WATER PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Food for the Hungry (FH) Guatemala walks with over 200 families of Xonca on their daily journey out of poverty to sustainability. FH entered the community with a specific goal in mind—graduation from FH programs in 10 years.

FH serves over 800 community members in Xonca through a unique development approach called Child Focused Community Transformation (CFCT). FH addresses needs in the areas of education, health, livelihoods, and leadership training. As part of this integrated approach, FH works closely with local leaders to identify their specific needs and challenges. Since 2010, the leaders of Xonca have come a long way to be the driving force behind the decisions for the community's well-being. Through interventions like Cascade groups, Savings groups, and kitchen gardens, a tangible difference can be seen in the lives of community members. As Xonca approaches its graduation, the community has highlighted safe drinking water as their greatest need and barrier to continuing their journey out of poverty.

THE NEED

In Xonca, the majority of families rely on rainwater collection and shallow wells for their drinking water. Unfortunately, these water sources are dependent on irregular and seasonal rainfall, which cause families to store still water in open pots and barrels. This method of storage increases the risk of contamination and leads to waterborne diseases that have significant effects on the families and children. FH staff regularly witness the damaging effects of these diseases—sicknesses that hinder the body's ability to absorb nutrients, keep children from attending school, and impede a child's performance in school.

When rainwater is in short supply, families have to travel up to three kilometres to unchecked water sources such as the Rio Azul river. Collecting water is a responsibility that falls to women and children, since men work outside the home. The time spent collecting water diminishes a woman's ability to generate income and steals time children could dedicate to their school work.



“We know that water is life and it is what we use every day. When we cannot find water, we think we could die of thirst. We all need water, our livestock such as cows, dogs, and others. That is why we are doing everything in our power to bring water to our community, thanks to the collaboration of families here.”

— Gaspar Gallego, **Water Committee President**

SPRING WATER

XONCA COMMUNITY

DISTRIBUTION TANK

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The community is determined to gain access to clean water. Local leaders, on their own initiative, have come together to make it happen and are rallying their community to the cause.

They started by forming a water committee to manage the project in the short term and to maintain it in the long term. The committee is made up of three leaders who have already purchased the land with the water spring using contributions from families in Xonca. With the support of the community, the committee has worked diligently to identify technical and financial resources to meet the needs of the project.

They have outlined the **needs of the project**:

- a collection tank at the newly purchased spring
- a water pipeline that will bring the water from the spring to Xonca
- a distribution tank in the Xonca community
- a chlorination system to purify the water

Each family in Xonca personally contributed 2,000 quetzales (\$325 CAD, representing about two month's wages for a farm labourer) to help with land purchase for the spring and to pay for the construction of the water pipeline. Together, they have already collected 320,000 quetzales (\$52,000 CAD)! All of the unskilled labour will be done by families in the community to reduce project costs. This substantial contribution from the community will cover the cost of the pipeline.

There is still a remaining need, however. The community doesn't have the financial resources for the collection tank, the distribution tank, or the chlorination system. These are key to providing Xonca with access to clean, safe water. FH Canada is prepared to fund the chlorination system. The remaining funding gap is about \$58,000 Canadian dollars. The land is purchased and labour is organized; if the outstanding funding is met, the community plans to begin construction in November 2021.

PROJECT TIMELINE

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Clearing the pipeline path | |
| | Installation of pipe and accessories |
| | Construction of collection tank |
| | Construction of distribution tank |
| | Installation of valves |
| | Construction of chlorination system |

OUTSTANDING BUDGET

| Activity | Cost (CDN) |
|--|--------------------|
| Chlorination System (Cost covered by FH Canada) | \$2,406.86 |
| Collection Tank | \$11,231.25 |
| Distribution Tank | \$47,131.68 |
| TOTAL REQUEST | \$58,362.93 |

1 MONTH 2 MONTHS 3 MONTHS 4 MONTHS 5 MONTHS 6 MONTHS

OUTCOME

The new water pipeline and tanks will improve the health and well-being of families and children in Xonca in countless ways. Easily accessed, clean water will eliminate the need to store rainwater which is at risk of contamination. Women and children will not need to haul heavy loads of water home, walking long distances alone. Children will not need to worry about risking their health just to quench their thirst. The families of Xonca cannot continue living the way they have been, and are giving up their time and resources to have access to safe, clean water. Let's join them.

A new future is being written for this community!

