



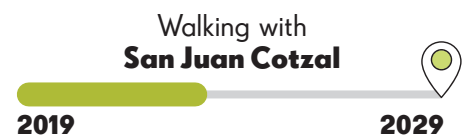
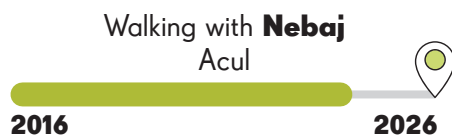
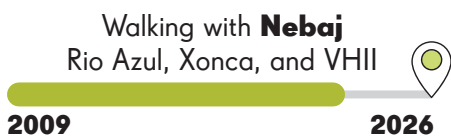
**FOOD FOR  
THE HUNGRY**



# GUATEMALA

Nebaj (Acul, Rio Azul, Xonca, Villa Hortensia II) and San Juan Cotzal  
**Year-End Community Summary**  
**Fiscal Year 2023**

Written by: **Alberto López** Translated by: **Ingrid Delgado Arana** Prepared by: **FH Canada**



Communities:  
**12**



Total Households:  
**3,862**



Total Population:  
**19,553**



Program Participants:  
**3,203**

# GUATEMALA

**G**uatemala ranks in the top five countries in the world most affected by floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes! So it's critical that our partner communities plan for such disasters. Just three short years ago, FH partner communities experienced horrific flooding and landslides from hurricanes Eta and Iota. They washed away livelihoods and infrastructure. In the wake of such a set-back, FH has been working hard with communities in Nebaj, Acul, and San Juan Cotzal to form disaster risk reduction committees so that when disaster strikes, they're ready to spring into action to save homes, lives, and livelihoods. This process has built resilience, and with that resilience, hope.

In spite of agriculture being at high risk from seasonal storms, communities have managed to establish 450 thriving family gardens that boost food security and provide income. Smallholder coffee farmers are strengthening their plantations by planting more resilient coffee varieties—6,000 new seedlings were planted this year! FH continues to equip these farmers to diversify their livelihoods and engage in value-added economic activities, for example, making honey products with their honey harvest.

Women across the communities have excelled at diversifying their income by joining their savings groups into associations called “platforms”. Working Women of Rio Azul have a business renting chairs, tables, and tablecloths; Women for Sustainable Development in Acul are growing and selling greenhouse strawberries; United Hands of Santa Avelina (new this year!) are in the exciting design phase of their business model.



Distributing school supplies, bringing smiles to young students/women in Santa Avelina.

# IMPACT STORY

## Maria Grows New Coffee and A New Future

Story collected and written by Daniel Gómez

Maria and Pedro have one five-year-old son, but Pedro hardly gets to see him. Maria explains, “There aren’t many opportunities to get a job in our community. That’s why my husband has gone to the capital to work and help support the family.” Sadly, economic migration is common in the Cotzal area. One reason is the unprofitability of coffee-growing due to the high costs of labour and inputs like fertilizer, combined with the low price smallholder farmers are offered for their harvest. Sandy soil, hilly terrain, and a lack of irrigation makes it even harder.

Despite the difficulties, Maria persevered with coffee farming, but it wasn’t easy. “I felt discouraged when coffee didn’t produce a good harvest because there was nothing else to harvest.” Their income suffered, as did her ability to provide enough food for their son.

### Maria adds fruit, vegetables, chickens, and bees!

But when Maria joined the Better Coffee, Better Lives project, she was introduced to new ideas that provided an integrated way to help her solve her problems. The training she received from FH was revolutionary for their family nutrition and finances.



“I am very happy for the arrival of FH Guatemala to our community. It has motivated us to continue with our coffee crops through the support we have received, for example, the chickens, the greenhouses, the vermicompost, and the family gardens. In addition, now we can sell our coffee to a cooperative.

— María

“Now I want to plant more fruit trees for shade on my coffee plantation because, through the training, I learned about their importance as shade [for the coffee] and as a source of extra income from the fruit. In the spaces without coffee, I can plant vegetables to give a varied and nutritious diet to my child. I can also sell my surplus for more income. My son will have more food!” Maria exclaims. “I am more independent because now I can produce my own organic fertilizer from the vermicompost that FH gave me,” she shares.

Maria is making and saving more money. She’s now added chickens and beekeeping to diversify her income! And maybe soon, Pedro can come home.



Maria and a coffee farmer depulp coffee beans so they’re ready to be washed, dried, and roasted!


# HEALTH

Improving nutrition for moms and tots



**88** pregnant mothers received **educational materials and prenatal vitamins**

**450** families provided with **vegetable seeds and organic fertilizer** for family gardens

**1,221** families received **nutritional supplements** for low-weight pregnant mothers and/or children under 5 as seen in the photo 

**36** families provided with **vermicompost training** and materials for family gardens

**453** visits to families with children under 5 to **promote healthy hygiene and nutrition**

**1,221** families participated in **cooking demonstrations** for recipes using nutritional supplements



**“I thank God for FH and the donors! Through the training we have learned a lot. I can see the results in my community—I see fewer underweight children and that fills me with a lot of happiness.”**

— Paulina, Leader Mother

# EDUCATION

Equipping families with tools, skills, and encouragement




**“What I have learned has been a great blessing in my personal life. They are topics that help us and we understand that we were created in the image of God and we have to respect ourselves and our peers.”**

— Kimberly, student

**60** caregivers of children under 5 received **training** and kits with storybooks and social-emotional learning toys

**63** young people visited by FH staff members and encouraged to continue in their studies

**288** students trained on **mental health**—managing and expressing emotions, assertive communication as seen in the photo 

**22** caregivers visited by FH staff members to **raise awareness on the importance of education**

**2,019** school supplies kits distributed to students

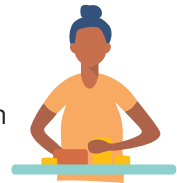


# LIVELIHOODS

Launching new streams of income



**99** women participated in a four-month **business skills training program**



**9** new **Savings and Loans groups formed!**  
**25** established savings groups supported

**1** new **Platform (United Hands) organized**  
made up of **5 savings groups** in Santa Avelina

# BETTER COFFEE, BETTER LIVES

Equipping 100 farming families to thrive



**37** chicken coop kits and **370 chickens distributed** to coffee growing families

**100** families received support visits, seeds, and organic fertilizers for their **family gardens**

**50** families received **vermicompost** training and materials

**1** new **coffee nursery implemented** (now 2 total)

**12** individuals **trained in beekeeping** and received beekeeping kits as seen in the photo

**25** coffee farmers trained in making **diversified honey products**



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Equipping the next generation for peaceful families



**63** **community leaders and 86 church leaders** attended training on disaster risk reduction as seen in the photo

**95** caregivers trained on **preventing domestic violence**

**368** **children and 163 teens** trained on mutual respect, non-violent relationships, and healthy communication

**92** follow-up visits made to young people **trained on non-violent relationships**

**4** radio spots aired for 4 months **broadcasting messages on preventing COVID-19**



**"I am very happy that a risk management committee was formed in my community! This helps us have more knowledge of what to do during an emergency."**

— Don Martín, member of Risk Management Committee



**“My life has changed a lot since I became involved in the training provided by FH. They taught me to always put my trust in God, despite the obstacles that we often go through in our lives. I have acquired a lot of knowledge about communication, expressing my emotions, and the consequences of our actions. I feel more motivated to pursue my dreams!”**

— Ana, 15 years old



Weaving is one of the ways Indigenous women preserve their ancient culture and make a living for their families.

## Thank You

FH Canada, FH Guatemala, and the families of Nebaj (Acul, Rio Azul, Xonca, Villa Hortensia II) and San Juan Cotzal thank you for your generous support of their development journey this year! Your gifts are helping gardens flourish, children grow healthier, and communities build resilience for whatever tomorrow brings.