

The Guatemalan Red Cross enhances its action scope in climate change related risk reduction

The project strengthening capacities regarding climate change related risks, implemented in the Department of Chiquimula by the Guatemalan Red Cross with the technical and financial assistance of the Netherlands Red Cross and funding from the National Postal Code Lottery, has included two additional communities to its list of selected communities. This was done at the request of these communities because their inhabitants showed their interest in receiving training on the topics of climate change and disaster preparedness.



One of these communities is the community of Santa Rosa, belonging to the Municipality of San José la Arada, bordering on other communities participating in the project. It is located at 22 km of the departmental capital of

Chiquimula of which 16 km consist of asphalt and 6 km of dirt road. The community has 496 inhabitants/105 families of ladino (mixed) origin. The majority of its population is dedicated to agriculture or occupies itself with commercial activities. 61% has an income of less than 300 Quetzales per month, which is barely sufficient to cover the costs of electricity, water and food. The community has water and drainage services, electricity, mobile phone coverage and although scarcely, means of transportation.

72 years ago, in its former location, the community experienced problems of landslides, which forced its inhabitants to move to its present location. Here, the same problems have started to present themselves, this time on its outer edges. In 2005, 5 families had to move because of this. And last year, new cracks started to show, premonitions of possible future landslides.

Based on these experiences, the inhabitants of Santa Rosa are very aware of the risks they are facing and they have expressed their interest to participate in trainings offered through our project. They have asked to be incorporated in the project.

So far, they have been included in the process of the organization of a local disaster reduction committee and in the first two sessions of a training series. We are impressed by the degree of participation of the inhabitants, teachers and students alike.

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