



My Community's Happiness is My Happiness

Angelina Ba is 56 years old and doesn't mind that she is considered an elderly woman. **That hasn't stopped this mother of four from making the most of World Renew training that is making a difference in her family's life.**

Angelina and her husband live in the small community of Nuevo Chapulin in north central Guatemala. The majority of the families here are of Kekchi ethnicity and maintain their ancestral ways and culture. Part of that culture dictates that women care for children and men work to provide for their families.

For three months of the year, Angelina's husband works on palm tree oil farms. **The money he earns is not enough to cover expenses for this family of six** and he works hard to feed them with maize and beans he grows on a small plot of land. Economic difficulties had Angelina and her husband considering selling some of their land for much-needed income. **This was when World Renew and its partner ADIP showed up.**

Nuevo Chapulin is a small settlement on land originally given to several families as a severance payment for their longtime work on one of the large coffee plantations in the region. Although the fami-

lies are very grateful for the land they own, the community needs many improvements. It has no potable water and no water distribution system, so everyone walks at least an hour to the creek or the mountain spring to get the water they need. There is no road into the community and the terrain is irregular with steep slopes, making it quite challenging for people to move goods into and out of the community as well as access healthcare and education.

For many years Nuevo Chapulin felt abandoned by the government and organizations, but **in 2016 World Renew's partner ADIP began visiting the community to assess the possibility of working with them.** This was the first time an organization showed interest in working with the families there, and the community was eager to develop the relationship. **Angelina and her husband were too.**

Soon after the community and ADIP agreed to work together, programs in adult literacy, justice, community organization, preventative health, and sustainable agriculture began. Since agriculture is the main livelihood of the people in Nuevo Chapulin, many were eager to attend. **Angelina's husband encouraged her to go.**

For Angelina and her family, training in vegetable gardening, crop diversification, organic composting, and hydroponics has made a

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big difference in their lives. They're growing more food and better food. An adult literacy program is helping many women in the community learn how to read and write, which is giving them the confidence to participate in community decision-making and be more active in their church.

Angelina sees even more change resulting from her community's new knowledge. **"The trainings have encouraged us to become a community in which there's unity, solidarity, equality, and justice,"** she says, "because without that we won't achieve the changes we want to see." **And Angelina feels hopeful.** "Nowadays I can see how lots of families that used to feel desperate like me," she muses, "are improving themselves and feeling hopeful. Food security has not been reduced one hundred percent, but we're getting there. My dream is that we will have a road that will connect us to the main road."

This dream is becoming a reality. As a result of the community's investment in their learning and organization, the leaders of the community have been able to get funding approved by the local municipality to hire a tractor and open a gap halfway to the community for four-wheel drive cars to access.

Angelina is considered an elder in her community. This hasn't stopped her from learning new things: "I constantly participate," she declares, "in the trainings that ADIP organizes in the community!" **And she embraces her role as well:** "It is a new opportunity to be an example to future generations," she says.

The community of Nuevo Chapulin felt forgotten for a long time. World Renew and our Guatemalan partner, ADIP, are forging a strong relationship with Nuevo Chapulin that is bearing a stronger community. Community members' enthusiastic participation in and application of training is making a difference in their own lives and the lives of future generations there.

"I just want to thank ADIP for their invaluable contribution," enthuses Angelina. "We cannot pay the costs of the trainings but **our gratitude to ADIP and World Renew is greater than what my words can express.** God Bless all the people behind making this ministry possible!"

Guatemala prayer requests

- For the new community development plans that our local partners are preparing for the next three years, that they may be relevant to the context of the communities and promote sustainable community transformation.
- For Guatemala's presidential elections in mid-August.
- For World Renew and our partner staff safety and they travel and stay in communities.

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Nuevo Chapulin: *An Empowered Community*

Nuevo Chapulin is one of many small communities in the north-central Guatemalan municipality of Senahú.

Located in the Chama mountains, it can only be reached by a 30-minute uphill walk. The 45 families of Nuevo Chapulin live in humble homes with palm roofs and walls of sticks or bamboo. The majority arrived here from other communities with nothing. Most of the 178 people living here don't know how to read or write.

But over the last four years, as Nuevo Chapulin has worked with World Renew's local partner, the Integral Development Association of Polochic (ADIP), community members have embraced numerous trainings and worked hard to put new knowledge to use. The results have been dramatic and encouraging, and Nuevo Chapulin can truly be considered an empowered community.

In 2015, ADIP began its work with a series of trainings focused on agriculture, health, education, and community organization. The community's attendance at these trainings was very good and we could see the trainings being put to use in families' homes and in the community at large.



Community efforts to organize resulted in the election of an auxiliary mayor and a community development council that have offered leadership. "Mother Leaders," elected by their peers, began leading neighborhood groups of mothers and have been dedicated to training others in the use of community resources, agriculture, prenatal care, and family nutrition.

Agricultural training has resulted in more productive and nutritious crops. Families have embraced kitchen gardens, food dehydration, and the use of chicken manure as organic fertilizer. They have built

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chicken coops and planted fruit trees and installed drip irrigation systems. Women are growing medicinal plants and applying them to their families' needs.

Community members now use organic waste as fertilizer instead of burning it, so their crops are healthier and their air is cleaner.

Community hygiene has also changed dramatically. Nuevo Chapulin has embraced the practice of hand washing and community members understand the connection between hygiene and disease.

Latrines are now cleaned regularly and the majority of families have tippy taps—simple hand washing stations—that they use and maintain with great care.

Most exciting to us is that the people of Nuevo Chapulin believe in themselves. They are motivated to continue learning and transforming their community. They have goals, like being a self-sustainable community able to produce what they need to live, and to have drinking water in their homes someday. They are united, working as teams to make things happen. And the change they have created isn't temporary but an entire lifestyle shift. They are thankful for the opportunities for learning and growth provided by World Renew and ADIP, but also know that they can do it alone when that time comes.



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