



## Aldea Las Llaves Community, Guatemala

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In the Aldea Las Llaves community, a water crisis loomed heavily over residents, especially families. The community members relied on a river for all their water needs. Parents felt a deep sense of despair knowing that the water they gave their children could make them sick, yet they had no alternative. The perpetual cycle of illness due to contaminated water was a heartbreaking reality. Children battled frequent sicknesses, ranging from stomach ailments to more severe waterborne diseases. Mothers and fathers, already burdened by providing for their families, found themselves further strained by the need to care for their ailing children.

María Angélica Mendoza, a farmer from the community, shared her perspective on the community's water crisis: "The water source in my community was risky because it was contaminated, and that made our families sick. I think the key to the problem was scarcity because some families did not have enough water to keep their homes clean. The dangerous thing was that our children got sick, and babies were born malnourished."

The frequent sickness had a grave impact on the children's development. The situation was particularly grim for infants and toddlers. Malnourishment and illness in these crucial early years of life had long-term effects on their development, setting a challenging path for their future. Families incurred healthcare expenses to care for their children, which placed a tremendous financial strain on households. These additional expenses made it difficult for residents to pay for their essential needs.

The water crisis placed community members in a dire situation, and community leaders knew they had to find a solution. When they heard about Living Water International's work in the region, they immediately reached out for help. Living Water Guatemala responded by drilling a new borehole and installing a new hand pump for easy access to abundant water!



A woman and her sons gather water from a nearby creek.



Construction begins on a new borehole!

With the new safe water source and the knowledge acquired from the sanitation and hygiene promotion activities, community members can reduce the number of illnesses due to waterborne diseases. Parents are relieved that their children no longer have to drink contaminated water and frequently fall ill. They can save money now that they don't have to pay health care costs for their ailing children. Furthermore, having a reliable, safe water source close to their homes saves residents considerable time and effort, allowing them more time for other productive activities, such as education and work.

María is grateful to finally have water she can trust. She said, "I am thankful that the new well will provide us with plenty of safe water. Now, I am confident that our children will not get sick anymore. Finally, we do not have to drink contaminated water from dry wells or rivers."



Children participate in a gospel proclamation activity with Living Water staff and Trippers.