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A team from Hebron CRC recently built 2 Tippy Taps for schools in Guatemala. Now the kids are enjoying hand washing!
youtu.be/01SGt_BAW5E

 YouTube @YouTube



07 Sep

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Knocked Sideways - a #RenewCrew guest blog post by @seanhawkeye bit.ly/2cbJwJj #ConcepcionActela

Look, listen, learn and... Love by the McGee family

This time we want to share with you an article written by the McGee family. They are a small team that visited Guatemala this August, from Hebron CRC, a church in Whitby, Ontario.

Plans for the McGee family (Steve, Nancy, David and Bethy) development trip to Guatemala began when Sadoc Aguilar (Program Consultant for World Renew in Guatemala) and his family visited Hebron CRC in April 2016. Being interested in learning more, Steve and Nancy met with Sadoc that afternoon. The discussion began with Sadoc explaining the World Renew approach of building long-term relationships with local partnering organizations to implement projects in four programs: sustainable agriculture and food security, preventative health, literacy, and food security. Nancy, being a nurse, found a natural fit in the area of preventive health and then the discussion focused on practical potential projects. Previously, a member from Hebron CRC (in 2014) and a team from Centennial College (in 2015), visited Petén Communities. Their trips had been successful in training the local women in the creation and use of reusable menstrual pads and since has allowed other Guatemalan communities to benefit from similar "Pads Training" workshops. More topics were discussed included hand-washing, which is very important in preventing communicable diseases. Also, the concept of building a "tippy-tap" for hand-washing at two community schools was born.

There was much planning and organization with the staff of World Renew prior to the arrival of the McGee family. The visit was characterized by World Renew as "LLL" which stands for "Look, Listen and Learn." In August, 2016, these three aspects were



fulfilled when the McGees met with community representatives. Feliciano Molina, a pastor, coffee farmer, and board member with partnering organization Vid y Pampas (Vine and Branches), taught them about the approaches used within the communities, their livelihoods and the benefits that the community had already received from World Renew and Vine and Branches. These benefits included improved agricultural practices (organic fertilizer creation, crop diversification, erosion prevention strategies, etc.) and literacy.

The first Pads Training and Tippy-Tap workshops were held in the community of La Palmera which is south of Quetzaltenango. Upon arriving in the community, the McGee family was introduced to one of the elementary school classes. The family reviewed with the children the importance of handwashing and the steps of proper hand hygiene. Then the workshops began with over thirty-five women and girls from the community. They gathered to learn about the basics of menstruation and an easy way to sew their own reusable pads using resources accessible to them. The women worked in groups and within a few

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hours, each one had completed their sewing. Lots of social interaction and happy faces were evident as seen in the following pictures. Opportunities to interact with the community health promoters were welcomed and used as a chance to further reinforce the information.

While the women were sewing, the men of the community sawed wood and hammered nails to build a Tippy Tap for the school. At the end of the construction project, the men were challenged by World Renew staff to build their own version of the Tippy Tap in their homes and many of them committed to doing this for the health of their families. Gracious words of thanks were provided on behalf of the community by Hector Cuc.

A second day of workshops were held in the community of Esperanza Miralta, which is further up the mountains of El Palmar. About fifty women participated in the workshop there while several of the men from the community worked at constructing a Tippy Tap for their school. Carlos Cabrera offered words of thanks on behalf of the community.

The McGee family was inspired by the fact that the people of these communities may be poor in material possessions but they are rich in generosity and love. Another word starting with "L" could be added to the World Renew "Look, Listen and Learn" characterization, and that is Love. Love was shared with the communities during the Tippy Tap and the Pads Training workshops. Also, an abundance of LOVE was received by the McGee family from the communities, through their warm welcome and the delicious meals they provided. John 13:34-35 states, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

The McGee family was supported by the Hebron CRC congregation through prayer and donations of handmade bags and samples to give out during the Pads Training workshops.

During this trip, the McGee family learned about the Guatemalan culture and recognized not only the needs but also the strengths of the communities. This experience was a true blessing to the McGee family; being a small part of God's work in Guatemala.

