

GUATEMALA STOVE PROJECT

Annual Report

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025



Guatemala Stove Project

Registered Canadian Charity #871977617RR0001

Coordinator: Tom Clarke

Board of Directors: Janet Allan, Miles Howe, Phill Brackenbury

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ABOUT US

The **Guatemala Stove Project (GSP)** is a grassroots volunteer-driven organization involving Canadians from many different backgrounds and interests who raise funds to help Indigenous Maya people of the western highlands of Guatemala break the cycle of poverty. Its primary mandate is to improve the living conditions of families through funding the building of efficient and safe cookstoves. The GSP also provides educational bursaries, microloans, and funding for emergency situations.

Over 26 years, the GSP has formed strong partnerships with three non-governmental, non-denominational Guatemalan organizations dedicated to helping improve the lives of the Maya people:

AMI (Asociación de Mujeres Ixchel),
AMMID (Asociación Maya Mam de Investigación y Desarrollo) and
CEDEC (Centro de Estudios Para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación).

For more detailed information and photos of the GSP's work, please see our website:
www.guatemalastoveproject.org

2024-2025 IN REVIEW

MASONRY COOKSTOVES

Due to crushing poverty, countless indigenous Maya in Guatemala continue to cook over open woodburning fires. Smoke from cooking fires contributes to a wide range of health impacts which reduces the lifespan of every member of the family, particularly mothers who do the bulk of the cooking in the home.

The harm caused by cooking over open fires extends beyond the home and community by causing deforestation, soil erosion and contributing to excess carbon loading of our atmosphere.

Working with our 3 partners – AMI, AMMID and CEDEC – the GSP sends funds as available throughout the year and local masons build cookstoves which burn cleanly and efficiently while safely venting the smoke and toxic fumes from the home. This greatly improves health for the entire family and World Health Organization studies show it extends lifespan by up to 15 years.



The traditional three stone fire

The increased efficiency means homes with stoves burn half as much fuel. The resulting reduction in carbon dioxide emissions is significant, with an average reduction of over two tonnes of CO₂ per year or about 23 tonnes of CO₂ over a ten-year lifespan of a stove. That is more than an average Canadian creates in a year (18 tonnes)!

We advertise that family cookstoves cost **\$350 CAN** to construct and the larger school stoves cost **\$600 CAN**. However, in the past year higher costs of exchanging Canadian dollars to US dollars – a necessity when we transfer funds to Guatemala – does mean that the actual cost of building a stove over the past year is slightly higher than the \$350 and \$600 advertised costs.



Cooking up a storm on a GSP funded family masonry cookstove

COOKSTOVES CONSTRUCTED FROM APRIL 1, 2024 TO MARCH 31, 2025

AMMID (45 family stoves)

CEDEC (150 family stoves, 2 school stoves)

AMI (50 family stoves, 2 school stoves)

Total family cookstoves built to date: 8,363

Total school cookstoves to date: 56

Total GSP funded cookstoves to date: 8,419

MICROLOANS

Since 2012, the GSP has contributed almost \$40,000 (\$39,907) to the AMMID “Creditos Verdes” program with \$3,907 CAN added to the reserve this year. These loans help recipients achieve some degree of economic security. Examples include using a small loan to buy livestock including chickens, pigs, and sheep and/or start small business ventures. AMMID staff provide support and training. The interest rate on the micro-loan is reduced when green initiatives are carried out such as soil conservation, or reforestation. When loans are repaid, these funds are once again available for new loans which means money donated to microloans continue to help families over and over again.



A Mayan woman with the pig she purchased using a GSP funded microloan

EDUCATIONAL BURSARIES

Since 2014, the GSP has supported the education of Maya girls by providing bursaries to help girls attend middle and high schools. Without this support many girls could not hope to access this level of education due to limited family resources. A yearly bursary costs approximately \$650 CAN for middle school and \$750 CAN for high school.



The 2025 Bursary students

This year the GSP sent \$10,760 US to our partner AMMID to provide tuition and support for 14 young women living near the village of Comitancillo. We welcome four new students to the bursary program this school year and Jocelyn Salvador, is the new community education coordinator.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

While documenting stoves built near Comitancillo in January 2024, visiting GSP volunteers met a young woman, Carmen, with three young daughters. The family had been abandoned by the husband and had no family support. Carmen washed clothes for others or worked in the fields to earn a meagre income. Their home consisted of a room with a metal roof, side walls of plastic sheets, a dirt floor, a bed and little else. There was no electricity, outhouse or water source.



Carmen with her daughters

After discussion with AMMID staff, a proposal was put forward to improve the family's health and safety. Improvements made to the home included kitchen walls reinforced with metal sheets, concrete flooring around the stove, a shelf and small table, a small garden from seeds provided by AMMID and a water 'deposito', or reservoir, for collecting rainwater. Some basic food items were also provided.

While documenting stoves in Momostenango, a GSP volunteer came across a family with 10 children. Carolina, the mother, was also pregnant with an eleventh child. This family had received a GSP stove, but it was apparent that they were hungry and didn't have much food to cook on their new stove. The kids needed food to grow, and Carolina needed good food to build her own strength and the strength of the coming child. A decision was made to give extra help to this family by providing emergency food supplies.



Carolina and her growing family

Working with our partners, AMI and CEDEC, high protein food was purchased for the family. Carolina and the kids were thrilled to receive this help, and joyfully helped unload the food supplies and bring them up to the home. We will visit them again next year to see how they are doing.

VOLUNTEER EXPOSURE TRIP

In 2024, the GSP did not sponsor a volunteer trip as there were pockets of political unrest. In 2025, conditions had calmed and 15 keen volunteers, including five first timers, travelled to Guatemala this winter. The volunteer crew met in the city Xela, capital of Maya culture in Guatemala, on February 2. Lead by Tom Clarke and Janet Allan, the group quickly bonded. For five days they travelled to the nearby village of Cantel to help build family stoves and to gain deeper insights into the realities and needs of the Maya living in the western highlands. They also traveled to the village of Panimaquim to witness and celebrate past GSP development projects in this small, remote village. All volunteers reported their admiration for the industriousness and resiliency of the Maya families they met.



GSP volunteers on the trip to Guatemala in February 2025

STOVE DOCUMENTATION

In January 2025 Tom Clarke and Phill Brackenbury traveled to Cantel to document the stoves built in the past year by partner groups AMI and CEDEC. Jan Christensen helped Tom complete the documentation of stoves built around Xela after the volunteer trip had concluded in mid-February.

In January, Janet Allan and Liz Ballantyne-Jackson travelled to Guatemala to the village of Comitancillo to document stoves constructed by partner group AMMID. They also met with the students who had received bursaries, their families and the administrators and mentors from AMMID. Janet and Liz also met with microloan recipients to discuss the changes that these efforts have produced. In addition, Liz led several workshops in sewing and jewelry making.

The documentation of each stove and in-person meetings with students and microloan recipients funded by the GSP ensures our supporters that the money they have donated has been put to effective use in Guatemala. Because the GSP is a volunteer driven organization, it can send over 90 cents of every dollar raised directly to Guatemala.



Liz Ballantyne-Jackson and Janet Allan documenting stoves in Comitancillo

FUNDRAISING 2024 - 2025

The Guatemala Stove Project raises funds that are sent to Guatemala to help the Maya through building stoves, education bursaries, microloans and emergency aid. We do this by organizing fundraising events, presenting to groups and providing information through our website, social media and info booths to spread awareness of the needs of the Maya.

In 2024-2025, the GSP held a Strawberry Social in June, set up a table at the CentrepoinTE Garage sale in Ottawa in June, operated and collected proceeds from the recycling depot at Blue Skies Music Festival in Clarendon, ON in August and held two events in November: a dance and silent auction at the Civitan Club in Perth and an on-line auction and appeal to regular funders.



Volunteers also helped to raise awareness and funds with information booths at Maplefest (April) and the Stewart Park Music Festival (July), both in Perth. Some volunteers also held individual fundraising efforts.

Clara Colop, Director of our partner group AMI, along with AMI employee Angelica, travelled to Perth from Guatemala in November 2024. They provided powerful messages and testimonials to the value of the GSP's work at presentations in the Perth area, in Toronto and in Ottawa.

Clara Colop, Director of our partner, AMI, experiencing snow for the first time while in Canada helping with presentations and fundraising in December 2024.

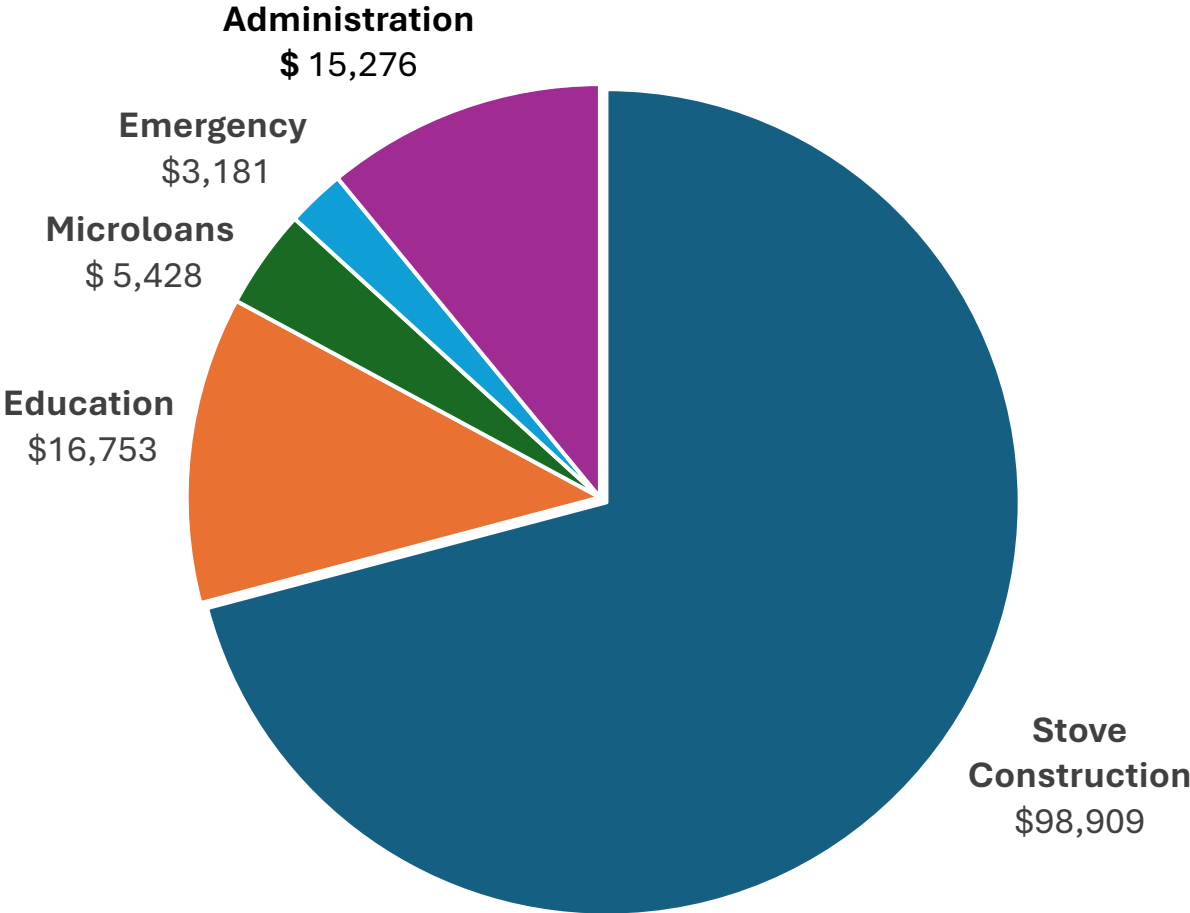
2024-2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Total Income (fundraising, donations, grants)

\$149,382

Expenditures

\$139,547



THANK YOU TO

All GSP volunteers, supporters, and donors, both big and small. Our work depends on your generosity.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Tom Clarke, the GSP Director, whose vision and efforts created the GSP and continue to help propel it forward into its 26th year of operation.

Our partners in Guatemala:

- ~ Clara Colop (AMI)
- ~ Rubén Feliciano (AMMID)
- ~ Ishim Yac (CEDEC).

Paul Hauraney, who has taken over managing our database and issues tax receipts and thank you certificates.

Terri Henderson, who helps to organize our financial information.

Perth and District Community Fund for providing funding for 10 stoves and a space for our volunteer meetings.

Liuna Local 183 members for their continued support.

Peter Halsall and Purpose for their generous donations.

Matthew Mitchell for his generous and consistent support.



For more information, please visit our website at guatemalastoveproject.org and our Facebook page at [GuatemalaStoveProject](https://www.facebook.com/GuatemalaStoveProject)



Volunteer Liz Balantyne-Jackson leading a sewing workshop near Comitancillo



A successful Perth Fall dance with AMI guests



GSP info booth volunteers at Stewart Park Festival, Perth