

**ChildFund International
Humanitarian Situation Report Template**

**Humanitarian Situation Report [#2]
[Local Land Conflict] – [Guatemala]
[21/12/2021]**

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[December 21th, 2021]**

Part 1: The Overall Situation

- Local Land Conflict in Guatemala
- Municipalities of Nahualá and Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, department of Sololá.
- At the moment, the families of Tzamjuyup who were evicted in September, were located in a territory (relatively safe) that they named "Nueva Tzamjuyup". They don't have livelihoods in that new territory so they went to collect corn in the accompaniment of agents of the national police when the armed confrontation happened.
- 78 families have been affected (*Total 468 people affected, 97 children enrolled in the CF sponsorship area have been affected*).
- As reported by the guide mothers of the development programs, two sponsored children have died with their family nuclei.
- Police in Guatemala said Saturday that 13 people have been killed in the village of Chiquix, 155 kilometers (96 miles) east of Guatemala City, in an apparent land dispute. The victims include women and children. The Guatemalan government imposed a State of Siege on two indigenous communities on Monday (12/20/2021). The GTM Army is likely to assume full control of these communities indefinitely.
- From the first moment, the necessary police officers have been appointed to find those responsible for these crimes and make evaluations of new strategies to try to stop more unfortunate events," the statement read.

Part 2: The Situation in Areas Where ChildFund Works

Context Analysis:

Officially, according to the 1779 of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Nahualá and Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán share their territory according to ancient custom. Today, the vast territory of the two municipios covers 218 square kilometers, about 2/3 of which is under the control of Nahualeños (or AjNawala'iib'), the "people of Nahualá". Disputes between the two towns have been common, especially since 1999, when the government of Guatemala arranged for the cabecera of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán to be moved to the site of Chwi' Patan within Nahualá's territory, after the original cabecera of Ixtahuacán in a remote piedmont site was damaged by Hurricane Mitch in 1998. Publicizing photos of houses with large cracks that made homes unsafe, Ixtahuacanecos (i.e., the Inhabitants of Ixtahuacán) had claimed that the hurricane had totally destroyed their cabecera, yet in doing so, they failed to mention that most of the homes that exhibited such damage were located on unstable land within an area that had been swamp well into the 1980s.

Officials of the national government negotiated a treaty between the mayors of Nahualá and Ixtahuacán to allow for the re-location of Ixtahuacán's cabecera. However, residents of Ixtahuacán occupied the land in question early, before the treaty was completely negotiated, before the land had been surveyed, and

before any compensation had been paid to the town of Nahualá and to the private owners of land in the area. Several Nahualeños were killed and injured by Ixtahuacanecos during conflicts that resulted from Ixtahuacán's precipitous occupation of the Chwi' Patan, which many Nahualeños consider a theft. The national government and the elected local governments of Nahualá and Ixtahuacán subsequently agreed to a modification of the original agreement, but compensation has still not been paid completely. Many Nahualeños refuse to accept the agreement, arguing that neither the general population nor Nahualá's local elders have been given an opportunity to approve the treaty, even though both traditionally hold a higher authority than the elected local officials (*such as the town mayor*). Nahualeños insist that Ixtahuacanecos have been increasing the size of Nueva Ixtahuacán by illegally seizing farmland from Nahualeños living near the settlement. They also report that Ixtahuacanecos have repeatedly harassed Nahualeño farmers, blocked their access to fields, and destroyed their crops and sheds in the area of Chwi' Pataan.

Since 1999, the government of the Republic of Guatemala has repeatedly attempted to resolve the conflict between the communities by fixing a border between their respective territories, but its efforts have been thwarted not only by continuing confrontations and land-invasions, but also by a misunderstanding of the complexity of indigenous systems of land-use and property.

Current Situation:

Since 2019, a series of confrontations have begun between the population of Nahualá and Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, leaving people dead but without triggering a humanitarian crisis as is currently happening. In May 2020, President Alejandro Giamattei declared a state of siege following an escalation of violence in the area. "These differences have persisted for more than a hundred years, and throughout history have claimed the lives of many, many villagers involved in the supposed defense of their lands," Giamattei said at the time.

Guatemalan police said different specialized units have been involved in maintaining security and engagement with the communities with equal measures being provided for both. The police statement condemned the attack, calling it "inhumane."

Now, one year later the confrontations between both populations have arisen again. On Sunday, September 19th, the conflict was generated again in the Chirajcalbal communities of both municipalities. Among which three of the communities where we have coverage are fighting with firearms. On Saturday, December 18th authorities have reported that 13 people (includes a dead cop) were killed in the village of Chiquix, 155km (96 miles) east of the capital, where a long-running land dispute has sparked conflicts between the residents of two municipalities.

After 13 people were killed in a massacre over the weekend, grieving families blocked a major Guatemalan road. They used the coffins of the deceased to call attention to systemic violence. Family members grieving the deaths of 13 people over the weekend blocked a major road in Guatemala on Monday with the victims' coffins as well as tree trunks and rocks to call attention to systemic violence. Guatemala's human rights prosecutor Jordan Rodas said the massacre in Chiquix started on Friday when families from Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan were "ambushed by a group of men carrying high caliber weapons" as they went to gather corn.

As coffins for at least seven of the victims were assembled along the Interamericana highway, Indigenous women in traditional clothing wept. Demonstrators carried signs that read, "We have The

Right to Live in Peace." Family members and friends of the victims called for justice and asked the government to resolve the conflict.

In these area, according to official statistics, more than 40% of Guatemala's population of 17 million live in poverty.

Reference:

- ✓ UNHCR Guatemala: <https://www.acnur.org/guatemala.html>
- ✓ CONRED: www.conred.org.gt
- ✓ Carmack, Robert M. (1973). *Quichéan Civilization: The Ethnohistoric, Ethnographic and Archaeological sources*
- ✓ Fox, John W. (1978). [*Quiche conquest: Centralism and regionalism in highland Guatemalan State development*](#)

Part 3: ChildFund's Response

CF and the local partner "Renacimiento" we are in constant communication and coordination regarding this situation. The greatest concern is the protection of children because they are very vulnerable to violence. We are evaluating the possibility of providing humanitarian assistance to the families that are located in the new settlement "Nueva Tzamjuyup" because it is a territory out of danger and their access is also safe; These are families' victims of the evictions in September and relatives of the fatalities of last Saturday.

The first actions that CF is taking are the following:

- Activate CF security protocol and Renacimiento security protocol for the protection of personnel. Field activities have been suspended regarding the regular programs and sponsorships.
- Communication with municipal authorities to address this situation.
- Communication has been established with the defender of indigenous women from the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and has suggested mapping the institutional actors in the area and identifying the scope of each organization to contribute to mitigating the immediate needs of the families.
- It will be supporting affected families with food kits and it is coordinating with COCODES to support the freight for the transfer of the bodies from the Quetzaltenango morgue to the municipality of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán.

The human needs preliminarily detected in "Nueva Tzamjuyup" are:

- Food
- Personal hygiene kits
- Shelter cleaning kits
- Blankets
- Pyscosocial support for childrens.

Actions in the next few hours:

- Mapping of key territorial actors to activate a network that generates advocacy with the guarantor institutions regarding child rights.

- Coordinate with the technical security committee activated in September and reactivate the space of local partners to continue with advocacy actions.

With CF and Renacimiento Staff, it has been determined to provide humanitarian assistance to families located in "Nueva Tzamjuyup" because it is a territory outside the context of conflict in compliance with safeguard, child protection and conflict of interest policies. The biggest challenge is obtaining funds to provide support with: food, biosafety kits (Covid-19 prevention), hygiene kits, blankets. It is important to consider medium-term actions considering the need of families to have access to livelihoods and housing.

Now, operations have been suspended and it will be evaluating in the future if the conditions of the area allow the continuity of development programs or determine their cancellation.

The CIPRODENI has issued a statement demanding the protection of the rights of the child but the response of the guarantors of rights such as the PGN has not been satisfactory.

Below Sections for Internal Use Only

- Staffing and Security
 - o Jorge Bejarano, Specialist Sr. Disaster and Operational Risk Management, jbejarano@childfund.org Jorge provides the backstopping to the Guatemala office and guides the local partners. CRDO and Renacimiento partners activate their own security protocols but aligned with the CF security plan.
 - o Pablo Urrutia, DRR and Humanitarian Specialist of Guatemala and Honduras CO's (tel. +502 47709357, purrutia@childfund.org). At the moment, Pablo Urrutia will be coordinating humanitarian actions with local partners and with the support of the CF staff.
 - o At the moment, only the humanitarian needs and the approach to the conflict are being identified to ensure the protection of children. Subsequently, a risk analysis will be carried out and mitigation mechanisms will be defined when implementing humanitarian response.
- Sponsorship and Grants
 - o Geraldine Mijangos, Manager, Sponsorship Quality (tel. +502 58592903 gdevera@childfund.org) is maintaining communication with the sponsorship team and reporting on the evolution of the situation. Strategies will be defined for the continuity of operations in a more secure way and accountability to the sponsors.
 - o The communication mechanisms that were used two months ago to collect gifts in kind will be used. This will be done with the support of Michelle Mancilla, but once the situation with the State of Siege we have the certainty of operating safely. (tel. +502 502 23159200 nmansilla@childfund.org).

	Childnumber	Name	Gender	Date of Birth	Age
1	122056765	Martin Fernely Gervin Tambriz Cotiy	M	21/12/15	5

No.	NAME OF DECEASED CAREGIVER	NEXUS	ENROLLED CHILD'S NAME	CHILDNUMBER
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1	Antonia Rosalia Guarchaj y Guarchaj	Mother	Carolina Catalina Chox Guarchaj	122056756
		Mother	Catarina Chox Guarchaj	122056758
2	Manuela Tzaput Rosario	Mother	William Erasmo Leonardo Tziquín Tzaput	846593830
3	Isabel Cotiy Tziquin	Mother	Martin Fernely Gervin Tambriz Cotiy (deceased child)	122056765
4	Lorenzo Tambriz Ixquier	Father		
5	Maria Tambriz Cotiy	Sister		
6	Miguel Tambriz Cotiy	Brother		
7	Manuela Tambriz Cotiy	Sister		

- Donors

- At the moment, the humanitarian network has not been activated and therefore it is very premature to be able to explore funds with donors, it will depend on the evolution of the crisis. We find it difficult for the protection cluster to be activated, also to consider the Christmas celebrations and it is not of a humanitarian dimension in quantitative terms, although it is in qualitative terms.

Due to the nature of the crisis, IO, GSS or Global Teams support is not needed. Only the backstopping of the remote international office.

Another contact:

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