



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Riecken,

Honduras and Guatemala, where we have been working since the year 2000, and generally Central America, present a region of contrasts: lush nature coexists with spaces ravaged by the irrational use of its resources; rich agricultural crops in areas with unacceptable levels of malnutrition; hardworking and resilient communities forced to migrate because violence and unequal distribution of wealth do not allow for basic services.

Under such difficult circumstances, community libraries provide real opportunities to strengthen communities and bring change to people in the region. For Riecken Community Libraries, 2023 was a year of continued post-COVID reconnection, and intentional opportunities made to deeply listen to the needs of people in our library communities. Whether to reinforce existing programs or to help define programming for new libraries under construction, the information gained from this listening helps us maximize the impact that can be made by each library—while ensuring that those who make it run have adequate training and tools to operate successfully.

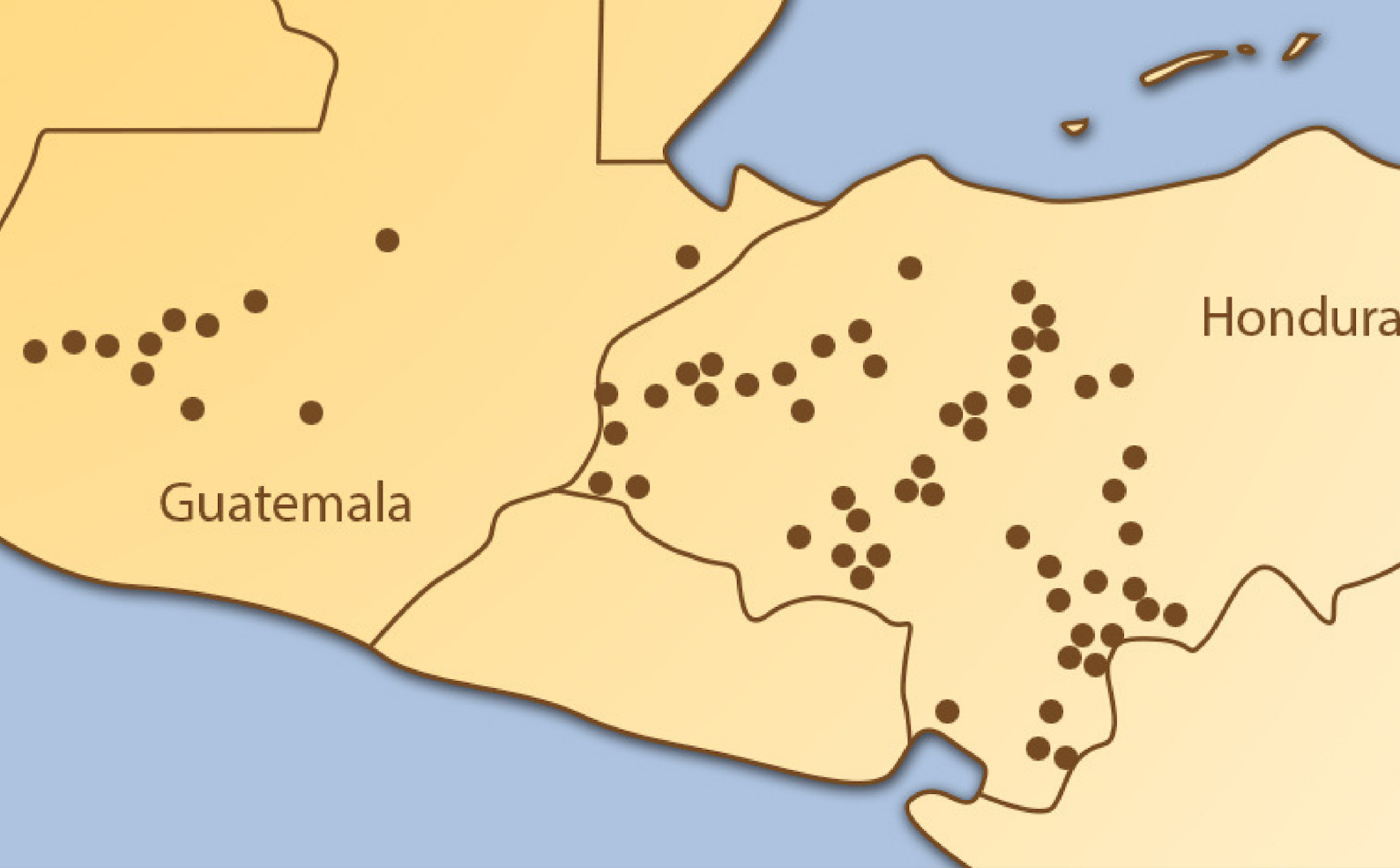
The growth of the Riecken Library network that began a year ago is motivating and exciting, with five Guatemala libraries either opening or well on their way to completion. We are looking forward to a visit in January 2024 by board members, donors, and other Friends of Riecken, who will join in the excitement of opening a new library in Guatemala. Meanwhile, we continue seeking ways to grow our offerings, especially with digitization of services such as the Odilo online library platform, and leveraging the funding investments of our partners, such as USAID/ASHA, to provide books and equipment.

It is truly exciting to be a part of an organization that is brings life-changing—and lifelong—learning opportunities to people who need them most. By providing access to information, knowledge, reading opportunities and use of technology, our small libraries bring very big impact. We are so very grateful for the critical support you provide and your willingness to share our story.



Bill Cartwright
President, Riecken Foundation





2023 by the Numbers

Honduras

102,264 visits were made to the 52 Honduras Riecken library network, supported by 3,526 local volunteers.

Guatemala

126,021 visits made to the 11 libraries in the Riecken library network in Guatemala, including support of 1,126 volunteers.

228,285

Visits in 2023- 53% women/girls and 47% men/boys
Under 13 yrs=83,520 ; Between 13-22 yrs=72,960 ; 23+ yrs = 63,115

114,542

Visitors used technology in 2023. 50% of new users were women.

66,029

Technology users regularly connected to the internet

4652

Local community volunteers in 2023 worked 167,458 hours

\$205,973

Volunteer hours value = avg. of 3 hrs/week/volunteer @ \$1.23USD

Riecken Community Libraries: A Community-Based Model

Community	Riecken Community Libraries	Local Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Governing Board• Local Volunteers• Local Programming Initiatives• Fundraising Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners/Donations• Technical Advice• Training• Building Construction• Institutional Visits• International Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Librarian's Salary• Utilities• Land/Building• Legal Recognition for Local Management



Many rural libraries in developing countries perish early from neglect, and lack of on-going management, relevant programs, or sustained community involvement. The key to the sustainable success of the Riecken Community Library networks in Guatemala and Honduras is the on-going cooperation between:

* An organized group of volunteer citizens who manage and lead construction, maintenance, and staffing of the library, and are responsible for the ongoing success of activities and programming

* The municipal government that provides land and funding, and supports the library's work as a recognized part of the community infrastructure

* The Riecken Foundation, who guides the overall establishment of the library, providing direction, financial resources, ongoing training and programming.

Library Improvements in 2023



In Honduras, the improvement of the infrastructure and equipment of 16 community libraries in the Network was supported. The total replacement of tin roof sheeting and reinforcement of beams and supports in the communities of Llano de la Virgen and Nueva Morolica were carried out, and computer equipment was provided to three libraries: Atima, San Antonio de El Playón, and Duyure.

In 2023, 30 libraries saw their computer equipment renewed, and Riecken Foundation supported the internet connection for 11 of them: Santa Ana, Lejamani, La Libertad, Santa Cruz Yojoa, Florida de Opatoro, El Tular, Cuyalí, Duyure, Copán Ruinas, Dulce Nombre, and San Francisco de Cones. The community library of El Tular reopened its doors with the management of the new board members, after several years without municipal support. The Riecken Foundation managed the provision of basic computer equipment and other educational resources to boost the programming of this library.

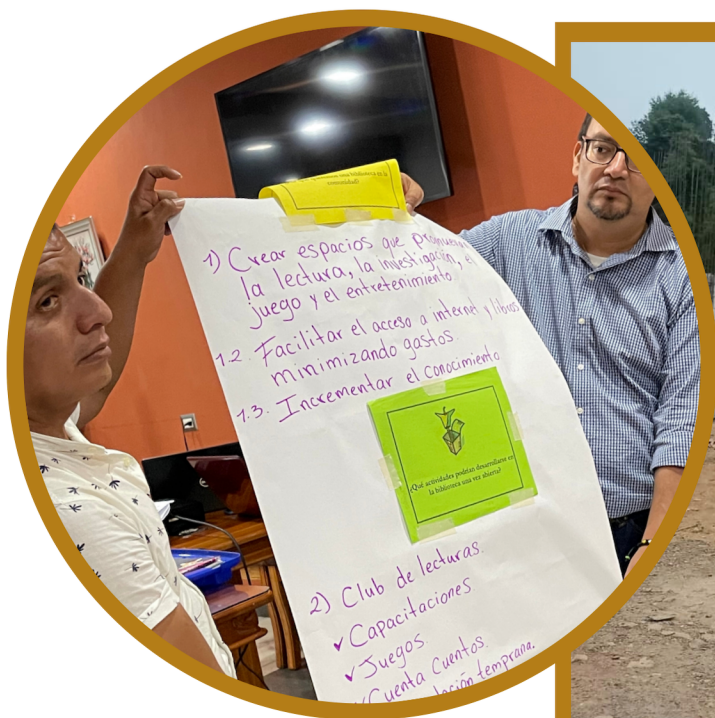


Growing Our Library Network



The Riecken Community Library network is growing, despite challenging physical environments and general administrative difficulties. The new San Juan Chamelco library, Gabriela Mistrel, is complete to the delight of its community, volunteers, and staff alike. Also in Guatemala, three new libraries, Palestina de los Altos, Catarina, and El Tejar, are in various stages of construction due for completion in 2024. Training of newly selected library boards and librarians has taken place, critical to the successful opening of the libraries.

With hopes for additional expansion of the library network by new libraries in the near future, initial contacts have been initiated with other potential communities in Guatemala.



RIECKEN FOUNDATION 2023 INCOME & EXPENSES

REVENUES	2023	2022	2021
Revenues, Gains, Other Support	391,538	346,957	871,732
Restricted Contributions	445,961	458,845	45,500
Other Revenue	331	452	361
Total Revenues, Gains, Other Support	837,830	806,254	917,593
EXPENSES	2023	2022	2021
New Libraries	255,285	143,511	43,080
Library Programming	132,855	57,248	372,188
Librarians	22,476	33,387	
Library Governing Boards	1,322	1,851	4,911
Volunteers	32,406	7,664	11,025
Other Staff Expenses	82,717	52,152	29,356
Monitoring and Evaluation	36,282	28,990	25,111
Financial Expenses	2,100	1,620	2,335
Building Expenses	29,568	30,793	25,939
Vehicle Expenses	2,800	873	2,730
Office Expenses	18,090	17,693	14,835
Salaries and Benefits	206,803	178,774	162,736
Professional Services	176,632	173,594	160,157
Miscellaneous Business Expenses	6,358	3,058	459
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,005,694	731,206	854,862
Net Assets, End of Year	-167,864	75,048	62,731





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