

## COMEBI – Guatemala (Report 2008)

### Literacy Program in Guatemala

The literacy program, run in partnership with a municipal government, is designed to strengthen and promote bilingual education in the Mam language as spoken in the western highlands of Guatemala. The program not only helps Mam speaking children learn to read and write in their own language but also promotes the reading of portions Scripture, and bible study material available in their own language.

#### Highlights:

- \* students from 39 schools are now participating in the Mam literacy program
- \* a motorcycle has enabled the Coordinator to more frequently conduct school visits
- \* a song and poetry competition was successfully initiated with 150 children participants.

#### Some impressions about the program....

A teacher commented that she liked COMEBI's program because it not only provides material for reading and writing, but it also includes children's stories based on local community life, care for the environment and the Gospel of Luke. All of this, she believed, helped to contribute to the personal development of the children. They are taking better care of the school, and have improved interpersonal relationships, both at school. There is greater awareness of their responsibility regarding care of the environment. The children are also learning about God.

The municipal officials expressed satisfaction with the work undertaken and feel the literacy program is effective. They financially support and participate in different activities without hesitation due to the strong reputation and credibility of the program.

They are glad that all children are treated with respect, without discrimination. Through the program children learn respect and discipline in their studies. The authorities also expressed appreciation for program staff that faithfully fulfills their promises in providing study materials and making programmed visits.