

## Guatemala

March 10, 2008

Global Links' first container to Guatemala of 2008 will benefit a 36-bed hospital in the northeastern corner of the country, in a town called Melchor de Mencos in the state of Petén. Situated near the Belize border, the area is remote and very poor, and the hospital serves a population of almost 21,000. Patients in need of more specialized care than this hospital can provide must travel over two hours on unpaved roads to get to the next largest hospital. If they have to go all the way to Guatemala City, the only realistic option is by air, which is prohibitively expensive for most people in the region.

This was a very successful shipment since we were able to provide them with materials to address nine of their top ten material needs. The donation included two medium sized refrigerators for storing vaccines, x-ray view boxes, two food delivery carts, desks and wheeled office chairs, gynecological exam tables, a physical therapy table, gooseneck lamps and filing cabinets. We were also happy to provide them with 20 overbed tables, after they told us that their hospital currently had none, as well as 20 bedside stands and 30 IV poles.

We were also able to meet a considerable number of their special requests for materials that are not listed on the Global Links forms, such as a microwave, an electric typewriter, a cast saw, and even some mortars with pestles (generously donated by Global Links board member Dr. Dan Wagner). It is always exciting to be able to meet such specific needs. This container was mostly filled with very basic materials, but materials that can make a huge difference for both patients and staff.

After having such a successful and gratifying kick-off year to our program in Guatemala last year, it is wonderful to get it off to such a great start in 2008.