



## Santropel, Colombia

**Region:** La Guajira

**Population:** 100 Indigenous Wayúu

**Technical Solution:** Water Distribution System

**Project Cost:** ~US \$3,100

**Financed by:** Individual Donors

**Completed:** March 2009



## Santropel, Colombia

### Update:

After the initial pipeline project in 2009, the mayor of El Pájaro, Víctor Alarcón, asked the Red Cross to provide new housing for the people of Santropel. The Red Cross agreed to build 19 new houses. One of the key reasons the Red Cross chose to implement the housing project in Santropel is because the community had clean water. In June 2010, Aguayuda returned to Santropel and extended the existing pipeline with help from the community to provide each new home with a faucet and access to clean running water.

### About Santropel:

Santropel is a Wayúu indigenous community. The community originally lived in the northern region of La Guajira until they suffered an attack that resulted in the massacre of the majority of the community. Two members escaped the violence by boat and found safety in Santropel. Because of their exile, the people of Santropel are extremely poor. Nevertheless, their courage and hard work steadily improve their situation each day.

### Previous Situation:

Santropel was not connected to the local water distribution system. As a result, the people, especially the children and women, had to walk to fetch water from a nearby contaminated well in El Pájaro. This arduous chore resulted in many missed school days, which prevented these children from receiving a proper education and a fair chance for a brighter future. Additionally, the dirty water they collected was the main cause for their health problems such as skin rashes and diarrhea.

### Implemented Solutions:

Aguayuda worked with the community to build a pipeline connecting Santropel to the water desalinization plant in El Pájaro. The community dug the 1km trench. Together, we connected the pipeline and verified that it did not have any water leaks. Keeping the environment clean is very important in protecting the aquifer (ground water). Therefore, a community clean-up took place where 100 bags of trash were filled with batteries, plastic, old clothes and other debris that littered the community.

### Project Impact:

The people of Santropel now have clean running water in their homes. The people are healthier and also have more time to devote to earning income, attending school and caring for their families.

### Evaluation and Monitoring:

Aguayuda assures the project is sustainable by maintaining contact with the community once a month via phone. Aguayuda has visited Santropel three times since the project was implemented in March 2009. Aguayuda is happy to report that the pipeline is still providing clean water to the people in Santropel.

**The Wayúu traveled long distances for water.**



**Simón and María work together on the pipeline.**

