



# THE CULTURAL SANCTUARIES FOUNDATION

Protecting the Protectors



## Big News! Our new Casa de la Cultura Mazahua in Crescencio Morales in Michoacan Mexico is officially open.

Four years after we first visited the Mazahua community and started this project, more than 300 people joined us for the opening ceremony and celebration on Saturday September 6<sup>th</sup>. There were speeches, musical performances, traditional dances, a traditional blessing, a Mazahua language graduation for over 20 young students, tears of happiness, tons of joy, a big feast and then much spontaneous dancing!

The building itself - donated to the project by the community and authorities of Crescencio Morales - was originally part of an old and disused red-brick convent and looked very, very different! Then came along the supremely talented Teresa Castillo Guarjardo who started work with us three years ago to completely redesign and rebuild what is now the Casa de la Cultura. She oversaw the construction with fellow architect Daniel Hernandez Salazar and a team of engineers, builders, plasterers, painters, electricians, plumbers and carpenters from the local Mazahua community. We are so proud of what they have achieved, reflecting perfectly what the community felt that they wanted and needed.

Our shared vision is now a reality and the Casa de la Cultura is open for all of the Mazahua community to enjoy, its walls lined with informational panels about the local Mazahua culture and traditions (in all of Mazahua, Spanish and English) and our portraits of members of the community. It will be used for community meetings, cultural events, workshops, after-school classes, Mazahua language lessons, music and dance classes and performances,

traditional cooking and meals, the display and sale of world-class local textiles, arts and crafts, learning about the local forest, conservation and the local Monarch butterfly colonies and more.

It will also, we know, be a draw for tourists from near and far to learn all about Mazahua culture and language, to meet this wonderful community and its local artisans and to explore the nearby forest, complete with waterfalls, orchids, fireflies, hummingbirds and a multitude of other birds and of course the world-famous Monarch butterflies. Please do come to visit!

The new center complements the ones that we have already built in Bhutan, Mongolia and French Polynesia, our Kwakwaka'wakw language recording studio in Canada, our cultural revitalization projects in Peru and Ecuador and two other cultural center projects in the works - all focused on helping to protect endangered indigenous cultures, languages and land. For the Casa de la Cultura Mazahua and for all of our projects, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to CSF's donors and benefactors and to all those who have supported and helped us. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Finally, a **request for your help!** We are currently fundraising so PLEASE do get in touch or donate through our website ([www.culturalsanctuaries.org](http://www.culturalsanctuaries.org)) if you would like to support our work. We would be over the moon to hear from you.

**The CSF Team**  
[www.mazahuaculturalcenter.org](http://www.mazahuaculturalcenter.org)