

CONCERN AMERICA

Quarterly Newsletter

concernamerica.org

Summer 2023

Dear Friends,

Over these last two decades, we at Concern America have greatly expanded our projects in Chiapas, Mexico, Petén, Guatemala, and Chocó, Colombia, and successfully transitioned projects to local ownership in El Salvador and Mozambique. What we have not done during this time is start a new project...until now!

We are excited to announce the start of a new Concern America field project: the San Miguel de Allende Integrated Community Health Program!



The communities surrounding San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, in the state of Guanajuato, are worlds away from the picturesque, colonial town, and face serious challenges in terms of access to health care and other essential necessities. Many people live in small villages, varying in size from 15-300 families, located hours away from any health care facilities with minimal transportation options.

True to Concern America's approach, we have spent the past year visiting the communities of the region, meeting with local, respected, community-based organizations, even bringing a group of community leaders to Guatemala so they could see our health work in action, and discerning with our board of directors and staff to ensure we have the resources and capacity to commit long-term to a new project. In addition to the great need and commitment from the communities, it is really the generosity of the Concern community throughout the pandemic and our 50th anniversary campaign that gave us the confidence to move forward.

“Never in my life have I witnessed such compassionate care...They treated every person like a human being. I want this for my communities.”

In Guatemala, the leaders of the new San Miguel project saw first-hand the work of health promoter practitioners and what that means for a community. One leader was moved to tears from the experience: “Never in my life have I witnessed such compassionate care, from listening to the patient, providing a full physical exam, testing onsite, and giving the test results the same day. I know these are things that everyone should expect, but that has never been my experience. They treated every person like a human being. I want this for my communities.”



We are still in the planning phases and the first courses are set to begin in February 2024, but already people are energized to organize and learn. The new program will train 30 practitioners bringing quality health care services to a population of 5,000.

To support this new program and the training of these new practitioners, we are excited to launch the San Miguel de Allende matching gift campaign. A donor has most generously offered to match all donations raised towards this campaign, meaning every donation given will be doubled. Our goal is to raise a total of \$280,000 which will cover all costs for the first three years, and we are already halfway there with this match! Read on to find out more about the program and how you can help us reach this goal.

Thank you for all of your incredible support, making this expansion possible and bringing health care to a new region in Mexico.

With gratitude and peace,

Cat Quinn, BSN, RN, MPH
Field Program Director



San Miguel de Allende Project Field Volunteer, Pilar Quintanilla

A key to determining the need for a health project and the local communities' commitments to partner with Concern America was Pilar Quintanilla, now Concern's newest field volunteer!

Born in Puebla, Mexico, Pilar is a nutritionist who has worked with community-based projects in Chiapas and Guanajuato, Mexico, and has recently taught at the university level. Pilar lives with her husband and 8-year-old daughter in San Miguel and is already deeply familiar with the people and needs of the region, including years of experience working alongside local organizations and leaders that will work with Concern on our new health project.



In the short time Pilar has been with Concern, the project is already advancing ahead of schedule, including identifying the first group of health promoter practitioner students from communities who are eager to begin their training. Together with Pilar, we are actively looking for another medical professional to join the project team in the coming months, with the goal of launching the practitioner training in early 2024!

Welcome to Concern America, Pilar!

San Miguel de Allende Matching Gift Campaign

To ensure the long-term financial commitments that accompany the initiation of a long term-program, we are also launching the San Miguel de Allende matching gift campaign to fully fund this new project. The start-up costs and first three years of training will cost a total of \$280,000.

Already, a family that has supported Concern for some years has generously committed to match all donations designated to the San Miguel project up to \$140,000! If you are in a position to give an extra gift(s) at this time, or stretched over three years, please take a moment to review and fill out the enclosed form to find the gift type and level that is most comfortable for you.

One way to ensure your support has the most impact is by joining our growing group of monthly donors. Every year, this group of dedicated donors enables us to fund our programs AND plan ahead with the confidence to continue our work. We have a goal of adding just 15 new monthly donors, and for 10 existing donors to increase their monthly gift, which should fully fund the new health promoter practitioner trainings every year! Here are a few examples of how your support can make a difference:



\$25

a month can provide essential medicines and medical equipment for an entire community

\$50

a month can provide a month's full training and accompaniment for a new health promoter practitioner

\$100

a month is the cost per family to have access to health care services for a year

\$1,000

provides full training for a new health promoter practitioner

\$2,500

yearly cost to visit all of the communities, providing support and training to new practitioners and essential care to their communities

\$5,000

can provide a year's supply of essential medicines and medical equipment to the entire program