

# CONCERN AMERICA

Quarterly Newsletter

SINCE 1972

Fall 2024

Dear Friends,

Though I earned my bachelor's degree in business management and have a long history in retail, I never could have imagined leading anything like Concern America's Artisan Marketplace. Ever since I joined the Concern America team a decade ago (2014), I have loved every aspect of the program, from working with the artisan cooperatives on designs to coordinating craft sales at faith communities, homes, schools, and online.



This is an exciting time of year for us. The new crafts arrive from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Bangladesh, and we constantly marvel over each unique carving, weaving, painting, and design that arrives. We ramp up our scheduling of more than 60 in-person craft sales and the corresponding volunteers to run them. These sales are how people learn the artisans' stories and appreciate their incredible talent and work.

Interested in purchasing beautiful, one-of-a-kind items that ensure artisans are paid a living wage? Check out our Fair Trade Artisan Marketplace: visit our office, shop online, visit a sale

near you, or better yet, organize a sale at your community of faith, home or workplace. See page two for a preview of some of the many new items this year!

Concern America's approach to community-centered development integrates four main pillars: health care, clean water, education, and economic opportunities. While each of these is a unique program, they all have the same goal, to build lasting transformation by working with a community's most important resource: the people themselves.

In the Craft Program, as it is often called, communities and families come together and develop cooperative businesses, ensuring each member is learning every part of the work, growing in their skills, and economically benefiting to improve their lives. Often building upon generations of traditions of weaving, embroidery, and related hand crafts, the artisans are able to significantly raise their standards of living while working from home in safe, culturally-supportive, and family-friendly environments.

When you support Concern America, you give people the opportunity to transform their lives and their communities. Health promoter practitioners build the skills needed to provide life-saving care; community water teams build this essential resource; and, artisans create opportunities for economic growth. Every donation makes possible this training and accompaniment of these community members.

With gratitude,

*Sandra Dones*

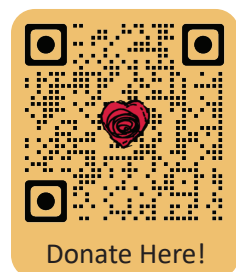
Sandra Dones

Craft Program and Outreach Coordinator



*"We are a cooperative of women artisans that began in 2001. Our work is traditional and passed down by our ancestors. When you buy our products, you impact mothers who use their earnings to support their families, and often for the education of their children."*

**Member of Mujeres Sembrando la Vida, Chiapas, Mexico**



# Global Gifts with a Heart!



*Day Of The Dead Napkins*  
**Las Abejas de Acteal**

MEXICO

Las Abejas (The Bees) of Acteal formed after a horrible massacre in their community in 1997. The group continues their struggle for peace and justice while earning a living through their indigenous traditions in weaving and embroidering.



*Wool Lamb Purse*  
**Pachilil Antsetik**

MEXICO

The artisans of Pachilil Antsetik formed in 1994, with their weavings and creations inspired by the nature that surrounds them. The members, all elders in their community, place great importance on teaching the next generation their tradition of the backstrap loom.



*Embroidered Fanny Pack*  
**Mujeres Sembrando la Vida**

MEXICO

The cooperative of Mujeres Sembrando la Vida's (Women Sowing Life) beautiful weavings and embroidery integrate images from their daily lives, most notably the flowers in the numerous nurseries that are found throughout their region of Zinacatán.



*Fringe Macramé Earrings*  
**Hogar Comunitario Yach'il Antzetic,**

MEXICO

The cooperative Yach'il Antzetic (New Women) supports the rights of women and improves their capacity to help themselves make a positive change in their lives through the means of lifelong literacy workshops, manual arts, and organic, ecological and sustainable productions.



*Double Appetizer Bowl*  
**Cucharas Ixchel de Petén**

GUATEMALA

Cucharas Ixchel de Petén is a cooperative of rural farmers who hand carve gorgeous spoons and other items out of the local hardwoods that are native to the humid jungles of northern Guatemala.



*Sorbet Scarf*  
**Maria de Nazareth**

GUATEMALA

María de Nazareth is a collective of women and their families from the Ixil indigenous community greatly affected by the civil war. Their weavings are made on back strap and floor looms, with designs from the San Juan Cotzal region of Guatemala.



*Elephant Tealight Holder*  
**CORR The Jute Works**

BANGLADESH

CORR-The Jute Works is a nonprofit handicraft cooperative that represents more than 5,000 rural artisans, primarily women. The Jute Works empowers women through handicraft production and supporting women's education.



*Rectangular Tea/Spice Box*  
**La Semilla de Dios**

EL SALVADOR

La Semilla de Dios (The Seed of God) is a cooperative of artisans of limited economic resources who make a variety of wooden items painted in the famous La Palma region folk art style.



*"I have been an artist for 20 years, supporting my family by making wooden spoons. I love working as a group. We come together with our spoons to check each other's work to ensure a quality product, and we also share the work equally so that everyone benefits."*

**Emiliana, member of Cucharas Ixchel de Petén, Guatemala**



Shop Fair Trade!

## Want to See More?

Visit our online marketplace @:  
[www.marketplace.concernamerica.org](http://www.marketplace.concernamerica.org)



Contact Sandra at [sdones@concernameric.org](mailto:sdones@concernameric.org) to find out how to volunteer at sales or host your own.