

# Spring 2021 Newsletter and Annual Report

Dear Friends,

As we step cautiously into this spring season, we are starting to see many reasons to have hope: the development of COVID vaccines, a decline in number of COVID cases, and the growth and change the spring brings. There is still significant cause to worry, with vaccines being a far-off reality for many, particularly in the countries and regions we work, but we are thankful to be part of such a caring community to accompany each other.

**You have led with your global heart, generously supporting our community, staying connected through virtual events, and enabling the vital programs and field teams to continue this transformative work.** In this newsletter, we share our annual report, which gives testimony of what you have helped make possible, including the organization's fiscal report, and what inspires us for the year ahead.

This pandemic has greatly impacted communities in Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia, but also reiterated just how essential it is to have midwives, health promoter practitioners, water system builders, teachers, and artisan cooperative members working in their communities. With travel even more challenging, and fragile government health systems further overwhelmed, the people themselves and their increasingly resilient communities are able to respond.

One of the ways that we are able to fully-fund these programs is our reliable group of monthly donors. Amounting to almost 14% of Concern America's annual income, these consistent contributions, varying from \$5 to \$450 each month, are a foundation of our work and enable us to strategically and sustainably plan ahead. **Can you consider becoming a new monthly donor and further strengthen our programming and sustainability?** Let us know on your return envelope, set up a monthly donation online, or schedule a check automatically through your bank.

However you are able to support Concern America, know how thankful we are that, together, we get to walk with communities as they build their own health, sanitation, education, and economic systems for all.

In gratitude and peace,



John Straw  
Executive Director



## 2020 Snapshots



**All Concern events were virtual and overwhelmingly successful!**



**In-person health trainings were converted to video lessons, shared widely by cell phones across communities and countries**



**Masks became essential safety equipment throughout the programs and made locally**

# Monthly Donors

**A LITTLE BIT ADDS UP**  
Recurring gifts of any amount add up over time, becoming 14% of Concern America's annual income

**174**  
monthly donors

**\$143.5 K**  
monthly donor giving

**14%**  
annual income

## Your Giving Helps!

# WHERE YOU LIVE SHOULD NOT DECIDE IF YOU LIVE

**How community leaders, Concern America field teams, and YOU ensured that people have access to health care, even in the most remote communities**

# 2020 OUR GLOBAL IMPACT

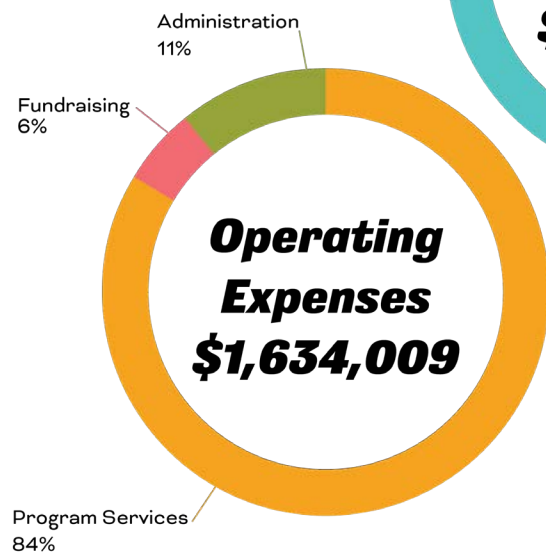
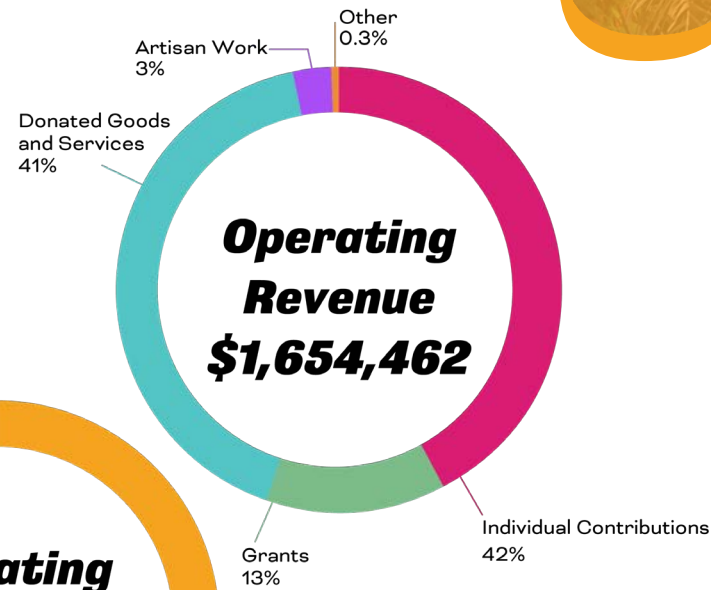
Year in Review

Since its inception, Concern America has always moved with the community, walking together and supporting them as they build a self-sufficient future for themselves. In this last year where whole communities were shutting down to stop the spread of the coronavirus, Concern America's teams rose to the challenges presented. Given the drastic changes our entire global population has experienced, our field teams have done even more despite constraints such as suspended public transportation, hospitals overwhelmed, and secondary effects such as increased hunger. Furthermore, we were often the only organization that remained in areas where we work. The health promoter practitioners especially felt the impact of this as they

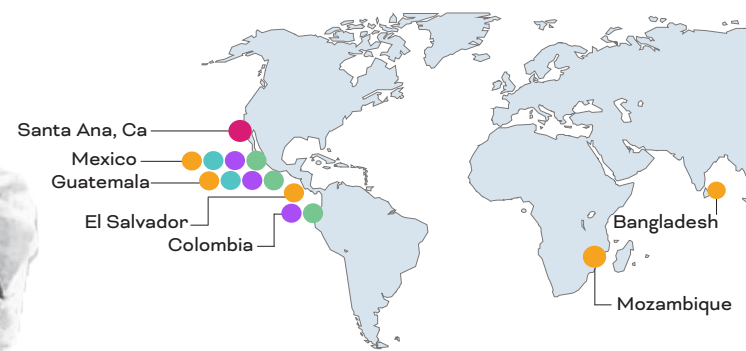
not only maintained health care for those with chronic issues such as diabetes, but also even expanded health services to their communities.

Also, when times changed, Concern America's teams adapted creatively and transitioned all of our work virtually. From filming and editing educational videos about COVID to be shared through mobile phones and other social media, to creating their own PPEs when none was available, the rapid movement of the health teams to instinctively protect, educate, and assist those in their communities showcases their collective love for their neighbors and the health of their communities.

## Operations



\*These numbers are from Concern America's 2019-2020 audit. The full audit is available at [www.concernamerica.org](http://www.concernamerica.org).



### Public Health led by Local Leaders



- Practitioners continued to see patients daily, serving a total population of 255,000
- Redesigned triage process in community clinics, improving safety of patients and practitioners
- Deliveries of two-month supplies of medicines to remote communities
- Emergency support and aid provided to 1,500 migrants staying in the region, especially important in areas flooded due to hurricanes

### Education and Virtual Health Training

Telemedicine improved access to care in the most remote communities and one-on-one accompaniment to lesser experienced practitioners through pictures and videos.



Informational and training videos created and shared with the 500 practitioners and midwives across three countries



Community distribution of public health resources for best practices and guidelines and a reliable source to answer questions and meet local needs



4,000 students benefited from materials created by the local Education Commissions, in their indigenous languages in Chiapas, Mexico

### Environmental Health

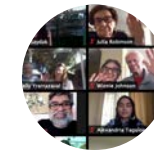


160 families now have access to clean water through the use of filters



Teams in Mexico and Guatemala gave trainings in 18 communities on water-borne illnesses and prevention

### Income Opportunity



10 cooperatives in Latin America, Africa, and Asia received accompaniment in logistics, quality control, and designs, as well as the purchase of \$19,700 worth of their beautiful hand-made products

### At Home

Switched to all virtual events while still building and keeping the sense of community and exceeding all fundraising goals

# ***GROWING WITH CONCERN AMERICA***

*Investing in each other and renewing knowledge through continuing education*

**We recently received this letter from one of the health promoter practitioner leaders in Guatemala, Eva, who is a lead trainer of newer practitioners and has twice traveled to Concern America's program in Colombia to train and mentor the practitioners there. Eva's selfless leadership is exemplified in her recent request, shown in her letter, below. Amazingly, the cost of Eva's three-year physical therapy program is only \$3,000, and the number of practitioners she will subsequently train, multiplying her knowledge, and everyone they will treat, is without measure.**

Dear friends of Concern America:

I am writing to you with the purpose of sharing a dream that I have had for many years: to study to be a physical therapist. There are so many people needing rehabilitation and I feel called to do something. It hasn't been possible for two reasons: one is that the courses were only being given in the city and two, because it would be difficult for me to cover the expenses.

Working daily in health care, I have always been particularly interested in helping those who have lost the functions of their muscles. For example, children who are born with cerebral palsy, although it cannot be completely restored, much can be done to help increase movements, and that is extremely motivating. This also includes people with amputations, particularly diabetics, and others who have had motorcycle accidents, people that suffer brain damage through a stroke, and so many more who arrive at our clinic. I would love to be able to do more to improve recovery.

One of the things that inspired me was a bricklayer who fell from the roof of a house and injured

his spine. He was unable to walk for many months and only able to pay for two physical therapy visits. From where we live in Las Cruces, it's an hour and a half of travel to the nearest physical therapist, and because of his condition, he had to pay for a private car that would take him lying down, costing \$77. The appointments themselves were difficult to schedule and cost \$20 each therapy session. With just two sessions, he improved tremendously and was able to walk with crutches.

Seeing this case and knowing the great expenses to pay for transport and care, the difficulties in getting appointments, and that there are very few therapists in this region, I know that if I studied physical therapy, we could then offer this service at the program clinic in Las Cruces, impacting the many communities that we provide serve.

As a multiplier with a responsibility to also train other promoters, I know I'll be able to share and teach these new skills to other practitioners, benefitting many more. For this reason, I would like to ask Concern America for financial support in this three-year program.

Thankful for all of your support.

Your friend and coworker,  
Eva Alicia



Eva teaching a new practitioner

## **UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS**

**Summer Celebration**

**June 27**

**Global Hearts and Good Spirits  
Wine Tasting**

**July 31**

**Grow a Global Heart Auction**

**October 23**