

Spring 2022

# Quarterly Newsletter



## Happy 50th Anniversary, Concern America!

We are humbled to acknowledge all who have made this organization what it is today, the millions of people who have worked for transformative change in their communities and our world, and the solid ground on which we stand today as we look to the future. Your global heart is the reason we are turning 50. You inspire our vision of health care, clean water, education, and economic opportunity for every community worldwide and ensure that millions more people will transform need into self-sufficiency.

We invite you to take a journey with us in this newsletter, and this year as we look back to dream forward! We are so proud of our history, and because of you, we are so incredibly excited and hopeful about our future. A full 75% of Concern's operating budget comes from individual donors, and the rest from small family and community foundations. This gives us the confidence and strong base from which to move forward with a new goal: **to double our impact over the next ten years!**

Many more people can benefit from Concern's transformative model, and we aim to double the number of communities we work in, people we walk with, health promoter practitioners and midwives trained, homes with clean water, and so much more. To have this impact, **we must raise an additional \$500,000 in donations and commitments over the next three years** and we invite you to be a part of making this goal a reality.

The founders of Concern America were Peig and Paul Fairbrook and Una and Sean O'Farrell, united together by sisters Peig and Una. Sitting around their kitchen tables in Stockton, California, they responded to the call to walk with their sisters and brothers on the other side of the world. A few years into their work, both couples, busy with small children and jobs and life's challenges, wondered if they should be satisfied with all they had accomplished and let Concern end. Yet, another essential figure, Fr. Mike Doheny, asked them to give him just a little more time; they would figure out a way forward.

Thankfully, Concern America's story did not end there. The streams of their efforts grew, becoming rivers that carried forward this small organization that has now worked in 15 countries on four continents, impacting more than two million refugees, internally displaced, and others lacking basic necessities.

We invite you to celebrate Concern's 50th anniversary year because you helped us reach this milestone. We look forward to gathering at special 50th events throughout the year, and working with you to expand the incredible impact of our Concern America community as we look towards the next 50 years!

In peace,

John Straw



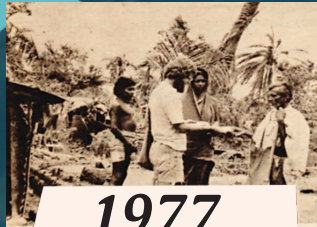
# People Can Make Their Own Change

It was December 5, 1972, when Concern America officially established its roots as an organization in Sacramento, California. Since its beginning, it is the supporters like you that have enabled us to do this work, walking with those working to make changes in their communities despite armed conflict, displacement, material poverty, and rural isolation. Your support provides training in remote communities so that the people themselves are able to transform their needs into self-sufficiency. With each passing day, more and more people are leading their own health, sanitation, education, and income generation programs where none existed, building a stream of lifesaving care and support for one another. Below are just a few highlights.



**1972**

Relatives of Holy Ghost missionary priests, Fr. Raymond Kennedy, C.S.Sp. and friends of Fr. Michael Doheny, C.S.Sp. (the Fairbrook and O'Farrell families) establish Concern America in Stockton, California.



**1977**

The first Concern America volunteer, Keith West, was sent to Bangladesh to work in nutrition centers for severely malnourished children.



**1982**

Concern America begins primary health care work with Guatemalan refugees living in Mexico, as well as the Handicraft Project with indigenous Guatemalans.



**1994**

Concern America accompanies Guatemalan refugees returning to their homeland, beginning health and appropriate technology work in Petén, Guatemala. A Concern America team remains in Mexico, working with the indigenous communities in Chiapas.



**2004**

Health program begins in war-torn Chocó, Colombia



**2000**

HIV/AIDS prevention project begins in Mozambique. In 2017, Concern America is able to transition leadership of its program in Mozambique to local leadership and control.



**2016**

"How to Teach Health," Concern America's 23-volume health promoter practitioner training manual, is published, expanding Concern America's innovative health model to the world.



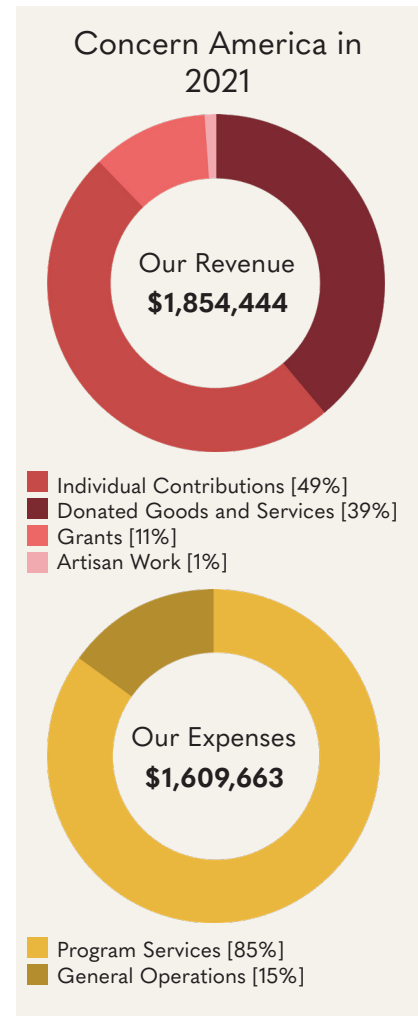
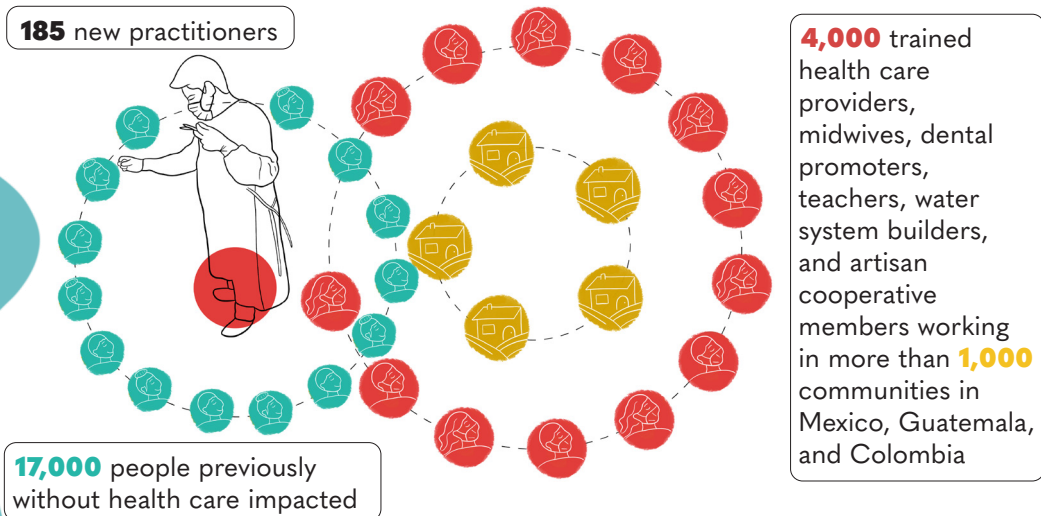
**2021**

Health Promoter Practitioners lead remote trainings and provided telemedicine support during the COVID-19 pandemic, sharing important public health updates to the communities and ensuring that patients had access to the much needed medications.

## Health Can Be for All

Concern America's award-winning health promoter practitioner model trains community members to deliver humanized and high quality health care to thousands previously out of reach, saving lives while transforming access to care. People are trained with a depth of knowledge, skills, and ability to provide health care, in their native languages, comparable to that of nurse practitioners and physician assistants in the U.S. They perform minor surgeries, palliative care, complicated deliveries, orthopedics, trauma management, diabetes control and treatment, and manage psychiatric conditions.

Because of your support, here is the impact that they've made in 2021:



**255,000** people have access to quality health care services because of trained community health care providers in Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia

**\$20,000** total amount of purchased items directly from the artisan cooperatives, providing them with a source of income

**4,500** children in Chiapas, Mexico supported by a community-centered education system, expanding to an additional 500 students this year

**450** families now have clean water through the distribution of potable water filters

### The Turning of the Tides

## Community Health Systems Can Be Strengthened

The ripple effect created from community members transforming one another's lives is a powerful force, a turning of the tide to bring tangible change to health systems in remote regions, filling in the gap of need with self-sufficiency.

Silvestre, an indigenous Mayan health promoter practitioner in Guatemala and former refugee during Guatemala's civil war, when asked what his vision for the future held, said, "I hope that my children are able to excel and to find vocations that help the community." Just how Silvestre's work transforms the lives of those in his community, his work is leaving a huge impact on their future, as his daughter follows in his footsteps to provide care, transforming lives as she now trains to become a health promoter practitioner.



50 Years of Support

# Celebrating the Past by Investing in the Future

Goal:  
\$500,000

As we celebrate 50 years of Concern America, we also commit to continuing this work in the future. In order to do so, we must raise \$500,000, which will enable Concern America to double its impact over the next ten years in health care, clean water, education, and economic opportunities.

For all who are in a position to give an extra gift(s) at this time, or stretched over three years, there are a number of ways to support. Please take a moment to review the enclosed form and find the gift type and amount(s) that are best for you; simply fill out the form and return it in the enclosed envelope. Collectively, we will all bring sustainable clean water, health care, education, and income opportunity to hundreds of thousands of people.

In addition to donations today, one of the most important ways to ensure our work for the next 50 years is our Global Hearts Community, the group that has taken the incredible step of including Concern America in their estate plans. To further celebrate our 50th anniversary, we have set another lofty goal: to engage 50 individuals and couples who have named Concern as part of their legacy giving. We are over half way there, as many of you have already taken this generous step! Will you help us reach 50?



## Global Hearts Community

"At one of Concern's events, we watched videos about these amazing people far away doing things we all want to do, which is promoting well-being all over the world. They were doing it so courageously, so effectively, and in such important ways, and all that excitement in the room served to really connect me with people though they are far away and so different.

"Connection is really important to me and there we were, connecting with people who were so far away and living the fact that distance and difference doesn't have to mean being distant and being indifferent. I invite you to find the way to give that works for you in your life. It really is contributing to this river of connection we are creating."

Elisabeth Le Guin, PhD  
Concern America Donor  
Global Hearts Community Member



## Our Upcoming Events

**April 9, 2022**  
25th Annual Walk  
Out of Poverty

**June 18, 2022**  
50th Anniversary  
Celebration

**October 22, 2022**  
15th Annual Grow a  
Global Heart Auction

\*Please check  
our website  
for campaign  
updates