

CONCERN AMERICA

Quarterly Newsletter

GROW A GLOBAL HEART

Summer 2025

Dear Friends,

In the United States, midwives delivered 12% of children last year. In Guatemala, the average is 68%, and in the rural region where Concern America trains and accompanies midwives, it is 90%. Midwives are essential to the health of children, women, and their communities, and in ways that go beyond pregnancy and childbirth.

In one community in Guatemala, the local midwife noticed an increase in children with diarrhea and related stomach issues. She reached out to the Environmental Health team within our program, who visited the community to test the water in 50 wells. Based on the results, they conducted water education sessions with the families. Half of the wells were contaminated, and the team facilitated the installation of water filters throughout the community, which drastically reduced childhood waterborne illnesses.



Concern America trains midwives with a hands-on curriculum that spans two years, encompassing both traditional midwives seeking to expand their skills and knowledge, as well as women learning for the first time. They learn to assist in complicated deliveries, detect signs of preeclampsia and when they may need to go to the hospital, and provide ongoing pre and postnatal care to the mother and infants. Your generosity has trained hundreds of midwives in Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia, impacting thousands of families every year.

As Concern America expands our midwife and health practitioner training in Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia, your support is as essential as ever. With this quarterly newsletter, we invite you to give as you are able and ensure this life-saving work continues to grow.

In addition, there is a new opportunity for you to make an impact, and even have it doubled. In Guatemala, there is a growing need for a centrally-located midwife meeting and training center. We are creating a space that will serve not only as a hub for learning and sharing but also as a sanctuary where they can collaborate and support one another in their mission to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates, ensure all mothers have access to basic and lifesaving maternity care, and build healthier families and communities.

Concern America was just awarded a \$30,000 matching grant from Impact Giving, a collective of women who pool their resources and award grants to nonprofits in southern California. **Can you help match the generosity of Impact Giving to fully fund the construction of the midwife center, a total of \$70,000?** If you are in a position to give an extra gift, please return the enclosed Midwife Center Matching card with your support or online at concernamerica.org.

Thank you to the Concern community for continuing to share your global hearts, making this transformative work possible!

With gratitude and peace,



Cat Quinn, BSN, RNC, MPH
Field Program Director



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Advancing Women's Health:

Dr. Julia Kim Expands Cervical and Breast Cancer Screening in Guatemala

Please join us in congratulating field team member Dr. Julia Kim, DNP, APRN, FNP-C for completing her doctoral program! Julia, a nurse who began with Concern America 13 years ago, achieved her family nurse practitioner degree last year (while continuing to work full-time!), and is now a doctor of nursing practice! We could not be prouder of Julia for her accomplishments, and excited by all that she continues to contribute to the team and work in Guatemala, including her doctoral thesis project that is already raising the bar for care and treatment there.



The level of care provided by the health promoter practitioners and midwives trained by Concern America are exceptional, and we have yet to encounter another community-based health program in which community members are practicing medicine at this level. Through Julia's leadership, the cervical and breast cancer screening and care that practitioners and midwives provide in Guatemala have just improved once again. Julia, together with the practitioner and midwife leaders in Guatemala, designed and implemented a project to increase cervical and breast cancer screening by 70%, and their eight-week pilot achieved an 84% rate.

Early detection and teaching women to do self-examinations are an incredibly cost-effective way to greatly increase survival rates, and the success of their work will expand to all of Concern's health programs.



Join Us in Welcoming Two New Concern America Field Volunteers!

Dr. Perla Pichardo, MD San Miguel Health Project



Dr. Perla Pichardo is a medical doctor from Mexico who arrived in our San Miguel de Allende region health program on June 14, and was already visiting the health promoter practitioners in their communities in less than 48 hours! Perla previously worked with agricultural workers

in Jalisco, Mexico, and is overjoyed to take the next step in her medical journey, in which she gets to work with community members engaged together in building a better world through health. Perla joins the San Miguel project as the first group of practitioners in training are well into their second of three years. Her first course to co-teach will be on maternal health.

Dr. Gerson Marquez, MD Guatemala Health Project



Dr. Gerson Marquez is a medical doctor from Honduras who most recently worked in northern Mexico as a physician. In addition to his love of community medicine and teaching, his mother was a health promoter in Honduras!

Gerson arrived in April and is already playing an important role in supporting medical care and providing training to local community members, empowering them to expand their health and leadership skills. The Guatemala project has grown once again with the training of a new group of practitioners that began in May of this year, and Gerson is engaged at all levels of the program in just a short time.

We are so happy to have Perla and Gerson aboard and look forward to the impact they will make through their work and dedication to community health.