

Quarterly Newsletter

CONCERN  AMERICA

Transforming need into self-sufficiency since 1972

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings, and we hope that this newsletter finds you well in these continued, challenging times. As the COVID variants continue to cause suffering in the US and the countries where we work, we continue to see how communities are organizing to help one another, keeping each other safe and healthy both locally and globally. In Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia where we support health, water, education, and income-generation programs, Concern America's community-led model has been not only transformative but life-sustaining during this time:

- When local hospitals and clinics close their doors to all non-COVID patients, Concern-trained health promoter practitioners and midwives provide high-quality, accessible care.
- When public transportation shuts down to reduce travel and the spread of the virus, local leaders ensure supplies of life-saving and sustaining medicines and organize emergency food distribution.
- As many homes now have clean water through community water systems and filters, families are able to stay healthier and have better defenses against diseases.
- And, when local economies are devastated, artisan cooperatives are still able to work in their homes to create their beautiful items that sustain their families and communities. (see back page)

Concern America's approach to development also helps communities be more resilient when unexpected challenges arise. In addition to the pandemic, just in the last few years, there have been devastating hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, and violence. We recently shared updates from Mexico where thousands were displaced from their communities due to civil unrest. The community of Acteal, which has seen its unfair share of tragedy, selflessly welcomed hundreds of people to shelter in their town, as well as organized food, blankets, and medical care.

Because of you, we were able to support these efforts, sending emergency funding and medical attention by the health promoter practitioners working in the area. In a letter of thanks addressed to the entire Concern community, the Acteal community council wrote, **"When we received these donations, we saw that we are not alone."**

Thank you for joining us as we accompany Acteal and the thousands of people transforming and improving their communities. If you are in a position to give at this time, your support will enable us to continue this work and ensure that they are better equipped to keep their communities safer and healthier.

With gratitude and peace,



John Straw
Executive Director



Strengthening the Fabric of the Greater Community

Artisan cooperatives such as Las Abejas de Acteal, the Spoonmakers of Guatemala, CORR Jute Works, and so many others not only make beautiful art, they also contribute to building stronger economic foundations through community participation.

Why Is Fair Trade So Important?



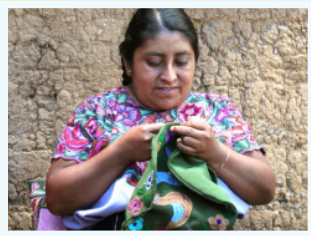
Creates reliable and alternative forms of income

Cooperative members, of which many are women and/or indigenous peoples, achieve financial stability through gainful, safe, and dignified work, enabling families and communities to stay together and achieve a better living at home, in their own villages.



Valuing skills and artisan ownership

Too often, artisans' creations are undervalued. Fair trade means artisans are fully compensated for their time and skills at prices they set themselves. For many, these skills are part of indigenous traditions passed down through generations. Likewise, the cooperative model ensures that each member participates in all levels of the work, sharing responsibility and ownership for decisions.



Multiplying impact

Cooperative members are also leaders, and they have initiated and supported other efforts to improve their communities including a center for children needing psychological support, clean drinking water through home water filters, sustainable agriculture, educational opportunities for women, and so much more.

We invite you to check out our Marketplace of Fair Trade Crafts (online or at the office). There, you can see and purchase many of the new items created by these cooperatives and support the important work they are doing in their communities.

marketplace.concernamerica.org

Our Upcoming Events

October 23, 2021

14th Annual Grow a Global Heart Auction (virtual)

April 9, 2022

25th Annual Walk Out of Poverty

June 18, 2022

50th Anniversary Celebration