

CONCERN AMERICA

Quarterly Newsletter

SINCE 1972

Summer 2024

Dear Friends,

We are overjoyed to share two momentous anniversaries this year: **Concern America is celebrating 30 years of working in Guatemala, and 20 in Colombia!** As a long-term community development organization, our work is to accompany communities to sustainably build local capacity so that they themselves become the solutions to their needs.



When we, as a couple, first arrived in Guatemala with Concern in 1997, the project was only three years old. The very first group of health promoter practitioners (pictured above) and midwives had just completed their core training and they had already eagerly begun to provide care in their communities and in the teaching clinic. At that time, our team of international field volunteers was eight, and we were working in 30 communities.

Now in 2024, our work in Guatemala brings quality and affordable health care to 350 communities, impacting more than 180,000 people, with only two full-time and one part-time field volunteer. This expansion is all because of the talented and dedicated local team members that were just beginning their training in those early days, and the many amazing volunteers who are and have been in Guatemala over the years. We feel so honored to walk alongside and work with these “multipliers” who now teach most of the courses, lead the community visits, run the teaching clinic, and even travel to Mexico and Colombia to support our programs in those countries.

It is moving to see this whole process begin again with Concern’s new health project based in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. The very first group of nearly 40 health promoter practitioner students is already half-way through the first year of training, and it is inspiring to watch their dedication, care, and passion in how they all approach their studies and what this will mean for their communities; the groundwork for a community-centered and led program is well underway. To make this all possible, we want to share the exciting news: **we reached our goal of \$140,000, unlocking the \$140,000 match!! Because of your generous support, this program is fully-funded through 2026!**



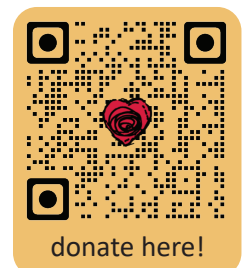
As we move forward and continue to grow, your support is as important as ever. There are new practitioner cohorts in Guatemala and Colombia in their second and third years of study; new and advanced midwife courses in each; water filters and systems continuing; and, expanding local teams that bring local, affordable, and transformative community development to their own communities. Thank you for your continued support and for all you make possible to transform need into self-sufficiency with Concern America.

In peace,

Cat Quinn
Field Program Director



John Straw
Executive Director



donate here!

Next Gen: Shaping the Future in Guatemala and Colombia

It is deeply moving to watch the growth over the years of so many health promoter practitioners, midwives, environmental health promoters, and more. Macaria started her health training as a young refugee in Mexico. After the peace accords were signed, she returned to Guatemala with her family and continued her studies. Silvestre also grew up in a refugee camp in Mexico, and began his training once he returned. Both Macaria and Silvestre started this work in their teens, and since then, they have become key members of the local team for decades, and are often highlighted in our newsletters and emails.



Silvestre during his practitioner training, 1999



Ismael and his daughter Anyi, 2024

A new trend is emerging on Concern America's projects: now some of the children of the first groups of practitioners and midwives are old enough to study and are following in their parents' footsteps. Silvestre's daughter, Angela, is now in her third level of health promoter practitioner training. In Colombia, Ismael has been an essential member of the Colombia team nearly since its inception. His daughter, Anyi, is in the new cohort of practitioners training there. These are just two examples of many!

Angela shares: *"I started my health promoter training, because for so long, I would watch my father help patients and provide them with care. I have always admired the work he does because there are people who need it who don't have many resources: he really cares for his patients and the treatments aren't expensive. Right now, I'm in my third level of studies, and I would like to one day achieve that level of knowledge so that I can also provide good care to patients and help them as much as I can."*



Silvestre accompanies his daughter Angela during her training, 2024

This generational building in a program gives a community hope when youth are continuing their parents' work creating a world where everyone has health care and clean water.

Save the Date



17th Annual Grow a Global Heart Auction
Orange, CA: **October 5, 2024**

28th Annual Walk Out of Poverty
Fountain Valley, CA, and global!: **April 12, 2025**

