

Global Pediatric Alliance

Annual Report 2023





From GPA's Executive Director and Founder

Dear Friends,

Global Pediatric Alliance (GPA) began 22 years ago with a simple premise: Empowering community healthcare in poor, rural areas will improve maternal and child health. Years later, this premise still stands.

We are filled with hope and gratitude as we reflect on what our many dedicated supporters have helped us accomplish over the past two decades: thousands of Traditional Indigenous Midwives & community health promoters now have the skills to provide essential and life-saving care to women and children; hundreds of health professionals are trained to provide respectful care to Indigenous women; community leaders are equipped with the tools to be dynamic advocates on issues critical to their well-being; and initiatives in vulnerable communities to help children work towards the basic elements of children's rights, such as access to clean water and good nutrition.

Most maternal and newborn deaths are preventable. At GPA we are working at the household, community and institutional levels to eliminate the roadblocks that prevent better health outcomes for women and children. As we reflect on the gains we made in 2023, we want to reiterate our profound commitment to working as strategically and efficiently as possible to reach as many women and children, health workers and communities as we can. And we will continue to promote and invest in the leadership of Indigenous women and midwives, as they unite to create lasting social change in their communities.

Our work is made possible due to the generosity and commitment of our donors, both individuals and foundations. And we are grateful to our team on the ground in Mexico, people who every day dedicate themselves to our founding belief that every woman and child has the right to quality, respectful and equitable maternal and child health.

Thank you for sharing this vision with us.

With Gratitude,



Stacey Ramirez
Executive Director



Scott Cohen, MD
Founder and Medical Director



2023 Impact

at a glance



198 Traditional Indigenous Midwives and apprentices have improved skills to provide comprehensive prenatal, birth and postpartum care to women and to respond to obstetric and newborn emergencies.

240 Midwives are advocating statewide and nationally for recognition of their profession, and for non-discriminatory conditions for the thousands of women and babies they care for.

1,274 Medical personnel who attend to tens of thousands of people in Chiapas have increased capability to provide respectful maternal care to Indigenous women.

1,167 Healthy babies have been delivered by midwives GPA works with.

1,100 Children have benefited from GPA-supported Community-Designed Health Projects.

145 Community Health Promoters are trained to provide pediatric first-aid, burn care, prenatal care, treatment of water-borne illnesses and more in Guatemala and Mexico.

2 million Men, women and children have improved access to more equitable and respectful care as a result of GPA's programs.



Supporting Healthy Mothers and Children: Four Key Pillars

1

Enriching the Skills of Traditional Indigenous Midwives

80% to 90% of the women in the communities where we work give birth at home with the help of a Traditional Indigenous Midwife. Many of these essential health workers learn their profession from their mothers and grandmothers. They provide respectful maternal care for Indigenous women in their own language, with their traditions. In-depth GPA training programs on evidence-based techniques enrich and expand their skills to provide quality, comprehensive care.

2

Promoting Equitable and Respectful Care

In Mexico 30% of women experience some type of abusive practice during childbirth in hospitals, with Indigenous women at the highest risk for disrespectful and negligent care. Our Respectful Maternal Care Program works with health personnel to provide Indigenous women with dignified, culturally-respectful care that is non-discriminatory and free of violence.

3

Engaging and Investing in Communities

Indigenous women in Mexico are twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than non-Indigenous women. Guatemala's infant mortality rate is one of Latin America's highest.

We engage with community residents to promote changes that will allow women and girls to lead safe, healthy lives. We also support grassroots community initiatives known to have a significant impact on maternal and child health, such as clean water projects, and community health promoter education.

4

Strengthening Movements and Advocacy

Studies have shown that Traditional Indigenous Midwives improve health outcomes, especially with culturally-matched care. Yet Indigenous midwives and the women they care for often encounter obstacles, discrimination and the violation of their rights. GPA supports their efforts to protect and preserve traditional midwifery, and advocate for equitable and respectful health services and policies for women and children.

**Most maternal and infant deaths are preventable with better
access to quality, equitable, respectful health services.**



Enriching the Skills of Traditional Indigenous Midwives

In 2023 GPA provided a year-long training series on evidence-based pediatric primary care; prenatal care; nutrition; birth techniques and management; the recognition of risk factors and danger signs; identification, management of and appropriate response to obstetric and newborn emergencies; and the integration of traditional medicine to groups of midwives in Chiapas and Yucatan, Mexico.

Traditional Indigenous Midwives' ancestral knowledge, together with the skills our programs provide, increase women's access to comprehensive maternal care, and ensures families are prepared for obstetric and newborn-related complications.

In 2023 we supported 198 midwives and health promoters to become skilled in:

- Prenatal care
- Nutrition
- Breastfeeding
- Danger sign identification
- Risk factor identification
- Family planning
- Neonatal resuscitation
- Hemorrhaging response
- Prolonged childbirth response
- Vaccinations
- Newborn checkups
- Preeclampsia response



- 1800 women received monthly prenatal care from traditional midwives who participated in GPA's 2023 Midwifery Programs.
- 100 women were referred to hospitals or clinics for pregnancy-related risks or emergencies by a traditional midwife GPA works with.
- Between 3 - 4 babies a day were born in 2023 with the assistance of a midwife who participated in GPA's programs.



Respectful and Equitable Maternal Care

Indigenous women in Mexico and Guatemala are 2 - 3 times more likely to die from pregnancy and child-birth related causes than non-Indigenous women. According to the World Health Organization, most maternal deaths could be prevented by providing women access to quality, respectful and equitable maternal care. Unfortunately, many Indigenous women encounter discriminatory, disrespectful and low-quality practices at their health institutions.

Our Respectful Maternal Care Program works with medical personnel, nursing schools, hospitals and clinics so Indigenous women can receive quality, culturally-respectful maternal and newborn care that is non-discriminatory and non-abusive. The program includes observation of practices, training sessions, and ongoing meetings between midwives and medical personnel.



“There are doctors in this hospital who do the exact opposite of what we learned in this training. What I’d like to improve is how patients are treated. I think this training can bring about positive change.”

*Dr. Azucena, Delivery Unit
at the Yajalón Hospital*

369 Health Workers and 1,000 Nursing and Medical Interns Reached in 2023



In 2023, GPA trained 369 supervisory staff in medicine, nursing and community programs to guarantee the provision of quality care with dignity and respect. We collaborated with IMSS Wellbeing and the Ministry of Health to train staff working at hospitals, local clinics, birth centers, and mobile health clinics, with the potential to reach nearly 2 million community members.



1,000 medical and nursing interns participated in GPA’s knowledge sessions on providing respectful maternal care in the rural regions where they work. They provide care at health centers and hospitals primarily to rural, Indigenous women who have their own language and forms of healthcare, which should be recognized and respected.



Collaboration between midwives and health personnel based on equity and respect is essential to providing appropriate maternal care for Indigenous women. In Yajalon, Chiapas, both groups came together as caregivers to discuss the maternal health problems in the region, and propose solutions based on their particular roles in the community and at the health institution.

Engaging and Investing in Communities

In regions where health services are scarce or deficient, women’s access to information on health during pregnancy, birth and afterwards is important to ensure positive birth outcomes. This care also depends on fathers and husbands. Working with men in the community is necessary to transform ideas about gender that subordinate women and negatively impact their health.

In 2023 GPA engaged with Indigenous and rural communities, through our Women Caring For Women and our Men’s Program. The population in these communities organizes itself via autonomous political and social structures. Our work integrates Mayan principles of respect for all people, which guide us as we support communities in advocating for and building dignified lives for women, men and children.



Creating a Safe Space for Women to Share and Learn

145 Indigenous women – Maya, Tseltal and Tsotsil-speaking - participated in GPA workshops to strengthen their skills in the areas of pregnancy care and women’s rights, in particular the right to a life free of violence and the right to health.



Men As Part of the Solution

91 men, including community health promoters, coffee producers and other leaders, reflected on how violence in all of its forms undermines the efforts of communities, families, women and their children to build full lives with dignity. Avoiding maternal death, an extreme form of violence against women, is also the responsibility of men and local authorities.



Communities Taking Action for Health Equity

Women and men strengthened their leadership skills, and took collective action. For example, 25 community health workers from Tseltal-speaking communities in Ocosingo, Chiapas came together to demand that the Ministry of Health ensure their local clinic is staffed with doctors and nurses. The clinic has lacked health staff for more than a year.



Strengthening Movements & Advocacy

Grassroots movements can create lasting social change. Since 2016 GPA has been accompanying the Nich Ixim Midwife Movement of Chiapas, made up of more than 600 midwives, most of whom are Indigenous Maya. GPA has supported their efforts to build collective power and leadership, defend the rights and health of their communities, demand recognition of their work, and advocate for improved living and working conditions for themselves and the women and children they care for.

In 2023 Nich Ixim built key alliances with Mexican and international midwifery groups, held press conferences and met with high-level state and national decision-makers. GPA supported their efforts by collaborating in ongoing educational workshops with the movement's representatives and spokeswomen, accompanying their work to strengthen local midwifery groups, and participating in statewide and national meetings.



Statewide Progress

The Nich Ixim Midwife Movement succeeded in forming a permanent inter-institutional working group with the State Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry, in order to address grave issues, including the refusal to issue birth certificates to children delivered by midwives. Nich Ixim also met with a state congresswoman who successfully passed a “Point of Agreement” urging state health services to recognize and facilitate the work of the midwives.



Expanding to New States

GPA organized the first statewide meeting of midwives in Mérida, Yucatán with 51 midwives. In 2023, Yucatan declared traditional midwifery an Intangible Cultural Heritage. The meeting provided midwives an opportunity to learn from state officials about how that declaration would impact their profession. GPA has been working with midwives from Yucatan through its Midwifery Training Program in collaboration with the Public Beneficence Board, and the Ministry of Health.



Reaching National Audiences

GPA participated on the coordinating committee of the National Agenda for the Defense and Promotion of Traditional Midwifery in Mexico. We helped organized two national meetings in Mexico City in 2023, with 50 midwives, academics, and representatives of organizations from around Mexico. In March the Agenda held a public forum and press conference to discuss a new national midwifery standard of care to be announced by the Mexican Ministry of Health.

Community-Designed Health Projects

Seed Grants Program

The communities we work with understand the causes of child and maternal health problems and have the motivation and knowledge to devise their own solutions, but they lack financial support and technical expertise.

In 2023 GPA's Community-Designed Seed Grants Program partnered with community-based groups in Guatemala and Mexico to provide assistance for well-conceived, sustainable projects that can significantly improve maternal and infant health. These grassroots initiatives reached more than 9,000 people. A few highlights are provided here.



ADEMI (Ixpiyakok Asociación de Mujeres), a woman-led organization in Guatemala promotes food security and reduces severe malnutrition in children and pregnant women. ADEMI is providing health checkups for 65 women and 55 children in the Kaqchikel Mayan village of Hacienda María, and equipping 25 women participants in the Municipal Commission for Nutrition and Food Security with leadership skills.



Quechi Partners, an organization in Izabal, Guatemala, trained 70 female community health promoters in 50 Mayan communities to address the shortage of health practitioners. The health promoters are trained in family hygiene, first aid, traditional and modern medical practices, health prevention principles and healthy childcare. The project will benefit 3,000 community members.



Aguacero, Tecnología y Salud Comunitaria a community group in Chiapas, Mexico, provides pediatric first-aid training to health promoters and residents in the communities of Bethel, Madronal, Comunidad de Tepeyac and Colonia La Maya in Chiapas, Mexico, benefitting nearly 2,000. For villages hours away from a hospital, this type of training can be the difference between life and death.



Bioconstruye México teaches women in rural areas of Mexico to build ecological stoves that protect them and their children from excessive smoke inhalation and severe burns, while also providing leadership skills. Forty-six people from Tehuantepec, Oaxaca benefitted from this work.



Women and Children

Share Their Stories



An Intergenerational Commitment

Florencia has been a midwife for 50 years. Her mother, mother-in-law and aunt, also midwives, taught her this ancestral tradition, and when she had her own daughters, Ildefonsa and Marta, she passed this knowledge on to them. “Women place a lot of trust in us, and much affection,” they say.



Delivering Healthy Babies

Paulina is part of the new generation of Mayan midwives from the Yucatan Peninsula. She is 35 years old and learned her profession from her mother-in-law. She now helps deliver babies on her own. She is excited to be a midwife and see babies being born. “It’s very important that we continue to have midwives, because women sometimes cannot get to hospitals.”



Saving Infants’ Lives

Josefa is a Traditional Indigenous Midwife who revived a newborn using neonatal resuscitation techniques that she learned in a GPA workshop. She shared her pride in having been able to put her training to use to save lives.



Preparedness for Health Emergencies

Faustina lives in Ranchería Bethel in Chiapas, where there are no health centers. She was happy that her community participated in GPA’s skill enrichment program. She thinks she and other residents will be better prepared to respond to maternal and other health emergencies, especially since the nearest hospital is two hours away.



Education Benefits the Whole Community

Xochil and Ana are sisters from Ranchería Betel, Mexico, where a GPA-supported project is teaching health promoters pediatric first aid techniques.

“What greatly helped me was when GPA gave us a workshop on newborn resuscitation. I didn’t have that information before.”

Luisa Sanchez Tón

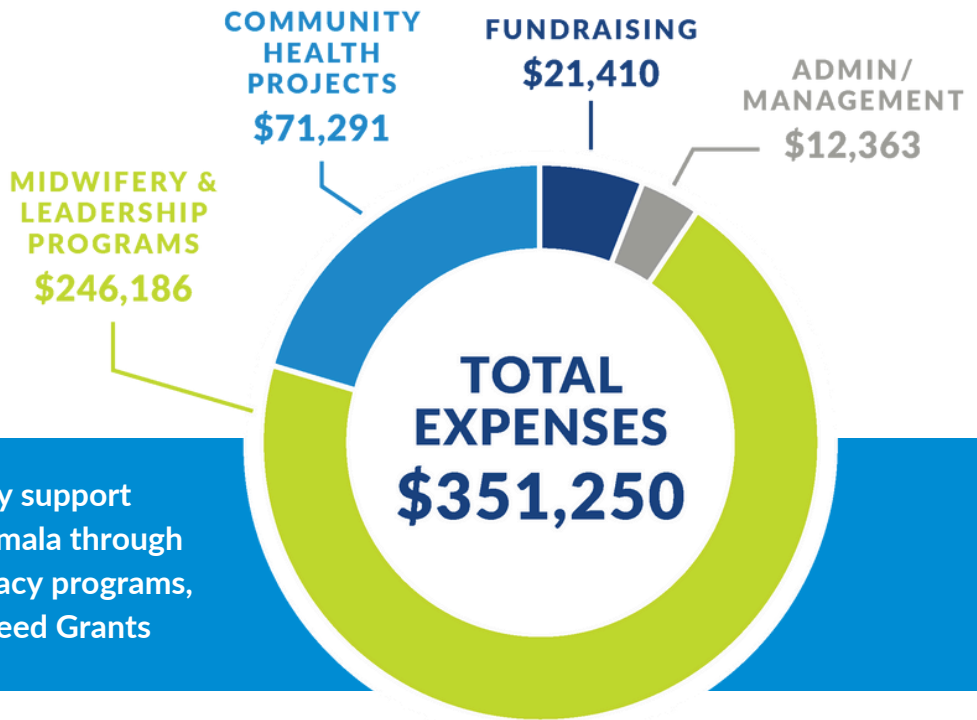
*Midwife and Trainer,
Camino de Viento Collective,
a GPA-supported grantee.
El Zitín, Chiapas, Mexico*

Luisa has since successfully resuscitated two infants born under her care.





2023 Financial Overview



90 percent of our funds directly support communities in Mexico and Guatemala through our Midwifery, Training and Advocacy programs, and our Community-Designed Seed Grants

SOURCES OF FUNDING

90%

Foundations*
\$464,403

10%

Individuals
\$50,930

.01%

Interest Income
\$3,481

**Includes donor-advised funds and some two-year funding*

ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$513,042
Fixed Assets	\$9,953
Other Current Assets	\$0
Total Assets	\$522,995

NET ASSETS & LIABILITIES

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$21,760
Unrestricted Earnings Balance	\$335,728
Net Income	\$165,469
Total Net Assets	\$522,957
Current Liabilities	\$38
Total Net Assets & Liabilities	\$522,995

THANK YOU

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous donors, both the foundations listed to the lower right, as well as our many individual donors who share in our commitment to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable women and children. Your generosity is critical to our work and makes a tremendous difference in the lives of so many people.

We are deeply grateful.



GPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(San Francisco HQ and Mexico Office)

Kate Kentfield, RN, NNP
Chairwoman of the Board

Teresa Ramirez-Montagut, MD, PhD
*Executive Director, Regeneron
Secretary of the Board*

Scott Cohen, MD, DTM
*GPA Founder/Medical Director
Treasurer of the Board*

Stephen Kahn, MD
*President, Abundance Foundation
Member of Board*

Christina Buysse, MD
*Clinical Associate Professor, Stanford
University
Member of Board*

Alesandro Larrazabal, MD
*Co-Founder/Chief Medical Officer,
Clarity Pediatrics
Member of Board*

GPA TEAM

Stacey Ramirez
Executive Director

Dr. Martha Moreno
Director, Mexico Office

Clara Rubio
Communications/M&E Coordinator

Juan Carlos Pérez
Community Programs Co-Coordinator

Adela Bonilla
Midwifery Movement Coordinator

Dr. Gabriel García
Midwifery Programs Coordinator

María Hernández
Community Programs Co-Coordinator

Sebastiana Pale
Community Programs Co-Coordinator

Josaphat Toledo
Respectful Maternal Care Coordinator

Beatriz Pérez Cadena
Respectful Maternal Care Associate

Silvia Bautista
Administration Mexico

FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Abundance Foundation

AMB Foundation

American Online Giving Foundation

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

International Foundation

Rocky Woods Charitable Foundation

SG Foundation

Every woman
and child has the
right to quality,
respectful and
equitable
maternal and
newborn care.



Global
Pediatric
Alliance



Photo courtesy of ©Andrea Balazs



 www.globalpediatricalliance.org

 info@globalpediatricalliance.org

Find us on [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)