



Hello from our spectacular team!

Dear Friend,

Welcome to Maya Health's Fall 2024 newsletter! We're excited to share our news.

Here in Guatemala, some people are growing anxious to see more progress from President Bernardo Arévalo, who has spent his first several months in office focused on rooting out corruption. We recognize this is a slow and difficult process and remain hopeful the Administration will bring forward policies that will help advance health equity, and we are looking forward to working with the new Minister of Health Dr. Joaquin Barnoya. Meanwhile, the rainy season continues, to the relief of our farmers. And finally a special bright spot: the entire country of Guatemala celebrated our Olympic gold medal winner Adriana Ruano in women's trap shooting and bronze medal winner Jean Pierre Brol in men's trap shooting!

Read on to learn more about our latest news, including:

- a fabulous interview with CEO Anne Kraemer on the Good News podcast,
- our work with the Ministry of Health to better serve mothers and babies, and
- why children continue to suffer from food poverty.

Thank you for all that you do to help build healthy, flourishing communities in rural Guatemala!



CEO Anne Kraemer and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Waleska López Canu at our quarterly all team meeting.

## GOOD NEWS PODCAST FEATURING CEO ANNE KRAEMER

Get to know Anne and find out what keeps her engaged and excited about our work in [this conversation](#) with Geneva Loftus, host of the Good News podcast produced by [MOVE92](#), a group of philanthropic advisors focused on women and girls. In this inspiring and wide-ranging dialog, they explore the power of locally led change, transformational funding practices, and the promise of giving girls and women the healthcare, education, and voice they need to be changemakers in their communities.



"If we can provide healthcare to women and girls, we can really transform families and communities. Because if they're healthy and they're able to care for their family and they're able to bring jobs home and money home, you really can see a major change."

– Anne Kraemer

Highlights:

3:12 – Anne's origins as an anthropologist researching the proliferation of nonprofits in Guatemala

3:59 – What it means to be a locally led organization

8:25 – The dynamics that have left Maya people locked out of healthcare

11:02 – Making life-saving maternal care accessible in Maya communities

16:46 – Addressing Guatemala’s staggering malnutrition problem from infancy

23:03 – Partnering to close gaps in health, education, and well-being

25:06 – The importance of long-term, trust-based care

30:17 – The transformational role of multi-year funding

36:40 – Building a better future by empowering women

39:28 – Winning the fight against cervical cancer

## BETTER HEALTH FOR MORE WOMEN

We are thrilled to be expanding our Health for Life Program with [Friendship Bridge](#) with the addition of three new community nurses to serve women in Nebaj, a large region in northern El Quiché that includes K’iche, Poqomchi’, and Ixil speaking communities.

We partner with Friendship Bridge, a microcredit organization focused on women and children, to provide health services for their clients. Through this program, our nurses offer more than 8,000 women community- and home-based preventive care for cervical and breast cancer, diabetes, and hypertension.

Thanks to all the Health for Life / Salud para la Vida team for working hard every day!



The Health for Life team



## GROWING & LEARNING TOGETHER

Our team continues to expand to support all of this amazing work - we now have more than 130 talented, dedicated staff members! It’s increasingly challenging to find a place for the whole team to gather for our quarterly meeting, but thanks to our intrepid Operations Manager Eddy Roquel, we always manage to make it happen.

At our most recent meeting on August 30, we came together outside Tecpán to greet new team members, take care of some business, and have some fun. We updated our knowledge of important accounting practices, delved into microplastics and their role in climate degradation and health, and learned about mindfulness and how to apply this tool at work, benefiting both our personal and collective well-being.

At the end of the afternoon, the entire team reconvened to practice outdoor yoga, connecting with each other and concluding a day that was different, dynamic, and enriching.

## BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR SAFE & HEALTHY BIRTHS

Our Mobile Maternal & Infant Health Program continues to grow and thrive on multiple fronts!

In August, our team met with partners from the Ministry of Health from Chimaltenango, including leaders in obstetrics and gynecology from the Tecpán Hospital, to discuss successes and challenges in our work together to make hospital births more accessible for Maya women in rural communities.

Dr. Esteban Castro shared data from the first half of 2024 and Dr. Edlyn Ramos Alvarado detailed efforts underway to prevent neonatal deaths through timely patient referrals and follow-ups, including using low-cost ultrasounds and a phone-based application to detect high-risk conditions such as intrauterine growth restriction and preeclampsia. The work is part of a research project with community midwives and Emory University to leverage artificial intelligence for early detection and treatment of maternal and fetal issues.

Participants discussed ways to increase successful patient follow-ups, such as consolidating visits for different check-ups so that patients do not have to come to the hospital on multiple days, something that can be especially difficult for moms with several children at home. They also developed a plan for Maya Health physician Dr. Anahi Venzor Strader to help train providers at community clinics to provide effective care for low birth weight newborns and their mothers.



Collaborating with the Ministry of Health for safe and healthy births.

Earlier in the month, the team had the opportunity to spend a week working with visiting scientists from Emory on developing and refining the application that midwives use to detect problems during pregnancy.



Meanwhile, we continue to recruit and train midwives and care navigators as we move forward with plans to double the size of the program!

### RECOMMENDED READING: WHY DO CHILDREN CONTINUE TO SUFFER FROM 'FOOD POVERTY'?

In their role as Associate Professor at Harvard University, Maya Health Chief Science Officer Dr. Peter Rohloff co-authored [this thought-provoking piece in BMJ Paediatrics Open](#) on "food poverty" among children.

The article explores a recent [UNICEF report](#) that finds that more than 183 million children worldwide live in severe food poverty, or lack access to sufficiently nutritious and diverse diets. The authors welcome the report's recognition of the systemic contributors driving this crisis, including conflict and climate crises, growing inequities, and food marketing practices. But they note the need to extend this analysis to look at the structural factors and injustices underlying these dynamics.

They conclude: Without challenging the dominant socioeconomic paradigm itself, we may not be doing more than lip service to the elimination of child food poverty. We must go beyond concepts of resilience to staunchly demand freedom, equality and peace.



Dr. Peter Rohloff

[Click here to read the article.](#)



A midwife shares her experiences.

[Click here to learn more!](#)

### JOIN OUR NEXT INSIGHT TRIP!

You are invited to our next Insight Trip from **October 29-November 2, 2024**. Participants meet the team, visit patients' homes in the rural communities where we work, make a stop at stunning Lake Atitlán, and join the spectacular All Saints Day Kite Festival!

"I was privileged to participate in one of the Maya Health Alliance Insight Trips. The many acts of kindness I experienced were a reflection of the generous spirit, compassion and passion that guides them in everything they do. Their work is truly impressive."

– Spring 2024 Insight Trip Participant

*Thank you so much for your ongoing support!*



**Maya Health Alliance | Wuqu' Kawoq**  
PO BOX 91 | Bethel, Vermont 05032-0091  
513-393-9878 | [development@wuqukawoq.org](mailto:development@wuqukawoq.org)

Follow Us



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it in your web browser](#)

[Unsubscribe](#) or [Manage Your Preferences](#)