



CEO Anne Kraemer catches up with members of our Family-Centered Nutrition team in the Central Highlands.

Dear Friend,

Welcome to our summer newsletter!

It has been a spectacular quarter, with our research and healthcare programs humming along and many wonderful additions to our team to help keep pace with our growing services, particularly in Maternal & Infant Health. As the team expands, we continue to cultivate a culture that supports feedback, sharing, and learning.

As always, we're also building partnerships and prioritizing monitoring and evaluation to understand what we're doing effectively and where we can improve.

Meanwhile, in gatherings across Latin America and the US, a number of our team members have had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with others doing similar work around the globe. Read on for details!

For the latest developments in Guatemala, from weather to politics, [check out my video update](#) recorded in Boston at the IZUMI Foundation Partners Meeting.

Thank you for being a partner in all of this essential work!

Warm regards,



Anne Kraemer, Chief Executive Officer



Click the photo for a brief video update.

COLLABORATING FOR CHANGE

Coordinator for Bioethics and Research Karyn Choy and CEO Anne Kraemer had the pleasure of coming together with dozens of change makers from around the world last month at the IZUMI Foundation Partners Meeting in Boston.

In a panel on Indigenous Knowledge and Agricultural Solutions for Nutrition, Karyn shared: "We go to the community, we are from the community. Collaborating with mothers to identify what is healthy to eat, so when they go to the tienda, they don't just buy chips and soda, which cause chronic disease, but provide them the information to make healthy decisions for their child. If mothers understand, if they connect, they can make change." She talked about the importance of understanding and incorporating Mayan traditions in the work, noting, "We as an organization have to understand and respect the communities, their ways, in order to collaborate together for change."

CEO Anne Kraemer joined leaders from Rwanda, Kenya, and other global organizations for a conversation on The Complex Progress of Local Leadership and Power Transitions. She spoke to the need to see and address privilege and racism to lead effectively.

We were so grateful to be included in this very thoughtful and inspiring meeting, and for the ongoing partnership with IZUMI, which supports our Family-Centered Nutrition work.



Anne Kraemer and Karyn Choy at the IZUMI Foundation partners meeting.

This spring brought other opportunities to meet and learn with representatives from other organizations doing important work around the globe.

- In May, Chief Medical Officer Waleska Lopéz Canú was invited to join the “New Voices” conversation, a gathering in Paraguay that was part of The Global South Conference organized by BRAC and Imago to cultivate cross-country dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaborative action.
- Magda Guarchaj, Child Development Research Program Manager, was awarded a [CAHI Jeffe Fellowship](#) to participate in a health leadership program at the INCAE business school in Costa Rica that focused on scaling programs with impact.
- On May 30-31, Communications and Development Assistant Andrea Enriquez joined the first [Funds4impact](#) summit in Lima, Peru.

It is wonderful to get the chance to learn with others and to share our work internationally. We believe this reflects the growing recognition that committing to doing the basics extremely well ultimately gets results.

CHECK OUT OUR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT!

We're thrilled to share our latest annual report, which covers all of the amazing developments from 2023.

Get the details on our research and programs and read our stories from the field highlighting our team's remarkable work.

[GET THE REPORT!](#)

2023 ANNUAL REPORT Maya Health Alliance Wuqu' Kawoq



Anne and Pat reconnect during his recent visit.

THANK YOU, PAT!

In April, wonderful longtime supporter and former board member Pat O'Brien formally signed over ownership to the clinic in Santiago, Sacatepéquez that he generously purchased for us back in 2009. This was his first visit in many years, as he keeps very busy running his agriculture business in Canada, and he took the occasion to transfer ownership to us! As our first clinic, it has been an essential asset that has served us in so many ways and has undergone many renovations and additions, including the latest – our state-of-the-art microbiology lab! Stay tuned for future dispatches about how Pat got involved and the changes he has witnessed as one of our first and longest supporters!

PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS

Key to our efforts to double the size of our Maternal & Infant Health Program is finding the right community partners to help make it happen. Our team has been spending time with Ministry of Health officials to build understanding about the program, which equips midwives with portable, affordable technology to detect problems in pregnancy early on and provides Maya care navigators to accompany mothers to the hospital when they need advanced care. We are building relationships that will help hospital providers better understand the needs of Maya mothers and accept midwives and care navigators as part of the care team. Our team also are meeting with paramedics and municipal officials to help make sure that mothers have access to emergency transport when they need it.



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

On another front, we are partnering with the Ministry of Health on our vaccine acceptance efforts. Together with researchers at the University of California San Francisco and Stanford Digital Medic, we have developed a series of videos using Mayan languages and images for a social media campaign to help get the word out about the importance of childhood and HPV vaccinations. When we shared the videos with Ministry of Health officials, they liked them so much they offered to help distribute them and asked for more in additional Mayan languages. We're excited to be working together for greater impact and sustainability

GRATITUDE FOR EDESIA

We enjoyed a visit in April from the team from [Edesia Nutrition](#), a non-profit social enterprise that produces specialized foods to combat malnutrition at different stages that they have generously contributed to our nutrition program. They accompanied our nutrition technicians on home visits and witnessed encouraging improvements in patients' weight and height. The visitors also had a chance to see the individualized education that technicians offer for mothers. It was a wonderful time together, and we even got to watch the eclipse!



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 at our Tecpán headquarters, 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. I feel blessed that I was able to witness the health care work provided by the amazing Maya Health Alliance team." – Spring 2024 Insight Trip Participant



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT: FOSTERING CHILD DEVELOPMENT

While there are many programs designed to improve nutrition and physical health for young children vulnerable to malnutrition and the resulting developmental delays, there are few that focus specifically on tracking and stimulating development.

The Baby Movil study underway at our [Center for Indigenous Health Research](#) provides parents with a phone application to help them track developmental milestones and engage in activities with their children to encourage development in the first months of life such as talking, singing, and playing.

In the first phase of the study, we worked with parents in rural Maya communities to design the application, which provides age-specific information and activities for newborns through age three based on international guidelines for child development.

In the second phase, researchers are assessing how the tool works for parents and their children and whether it is effective in supporting child development.

PARTNERS: CHLA-Children's Hospital Los Angeles

FUNDING: National Institutes of Health / National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (Principal investigator: Beth Smith, Children's Hospital Los Angeles)

RELATED PUBLICATIONS:

[Rosales MR, Rohloff P, Vanderbilt DL, Tripathi T, Valentini NC, Dusing S, Smith BA. Collecting Infant Environmental and Experiential Data Using Smartphone Surveys. *Pediatr Phys Ther.* 2021 Jan 01; 33\(1\):47-49.](#)

[Lobo MA, Hall ML, Greenspan B, Rohloff P, Prosser LA, Smith BA. Wearables for Pediatric Rehabilitation: How to Optimally Design and Use Products to Meet the Needs of Users. *Phys Ther.* 2019 Jun 1;99\(6\):647-657.](#)

MAKING THE ROUNDS

Every year, CEO Anne Kraemer travels to visit with our far-flung team members working in remote communities across Guatemala's Highlands. Here are a few shots from some of her visits, near and far!



The team at our Boca Costa clinic



Health for Life team, Santo Tomas, Boca Costa



Women's Health team



Health for Life team, Quetzaltenango



Patient care coordinator Yesenia
Serech Ajquijay

Monitoring & Evaluation team

Dra. Flor Marie Lopez Car, Health
Programs Manager

Thank you so much for your ongoing support!



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