



# GRASSROOTS

IMPACT GLOBAL HEALTH ALLIANCE // TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES, ONE MOTHER AT A TIME // WINTER 2024

## FROM THE DESK OF ANDREW HERRERA



Andrew Herrera  
Executive Director, MPH, MBA

On September 20, 2024, Impact Global Health Alliance (IGHA) was announced to our supporters as our new name. This new name was necessary to better characterize our work which had transitioned from initiating and supervising field projects [Bolivia, Guatemala and Liberia] during the 1980s and 1990s

to a more empowering approach of consulting and facilitating allies in additional countries including Haiti, Kenya and recently Togo.

Our evolution began more than a decade ago with the maturation of our alliance partners in Bolivia and Guatemala, with the establishment of their boards of directors within their respective countries. This critical step by our alliance partners' projects has empowered their leaders to focus on creating sustainable community-centered organizations while maintaining a laser focus on serving the most vulnerable using public health science. This shift in direction has also elevated Impact Global Health Alliance's vision to re-imagine its future relevance to our alliance partners.

### Our activities this past year further encapsulate why the name change was necessary:

**1** A 10-year agreement was signed earlier this year with the Methodist Church of Togo to transform their three medical clinics into a dynamic data-driven community-health system, founded on the principles of the Census-Based Impact-Oriented (CBIO+) methodology and women's Care Groups. The main goal of the CBIO+ Approach is to improve the health of the whole community through strong partnerships with local people. The approach focuses on two main priorities: (1) health issues identified through local data, and (2) the community's own priorities. CBIO+ regularly brings

health education and services to every home. The Care Group Approach is a teaching model that helps create positive changes in behavior at the household level. It uses a step-by-step method where participants learn actively and support each other in the learning process. The lessons are designed so that people who can't read, as well as their teachers, can easily understand and use them. These approaches are supported by research and have been reviewed by experts, showing that they are effective, proven ways to improve health and behaviors in communities. Volunteer-led Women's Care groups assure that project expenditures are minimized, community outreach and education maximized, and cultural sensitivities to health care are maintained or reinstated.

**2** Our Haitian health alliance partner recently supported training of the Togolese staff for whom both French is a native language. Together the Togolese and Haitian leaders visited our alliance partner in Kenya with their plane tickets and time paid for by their respective organizations.

**3** The Meaningful app<sup>©</sup> [an online, real-time data entry tool co-developed with Microsoft] was field tested last year in Kenya and is now being used in Haiti with novel projects like school and vocational training.

**4** Facilitation of every 6-week Zoom meetings which our alliance partners now demand and together problem-solve, by sharing knowledge, experiences, comradeships and also vision using real-time interpretation to address opportunities and threats (including existential threats).

**5** The doubling in assets of our Hope through Health Foundation to \$3 million in the past 24 months by 130+ donors assures that Impact Global Health Alliance continues with broad support among our donors. IGHA can then heed the needs of the communities it serves, and never again be grant-driven and dependent upon the demands of external funders who have their own priorities.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Avery C. Manchester**

**March 4, 1929 – November 3, 2024**

Avery C. Manchester, a Methodist missionary, church leader, and counselor, passed away on November 3, 2024, at age 95. From serving in the Belgian Congo to leading in the United Methodist Church, Avery's life was dedicated to compassion, justice, and healing. As Secretary for Missionary Personnel, he mentored our Co-Founders, Dr. Henry Perry and Dr. Alice Weldon, during their formative years.

Avery championed our mission, serving on our Board (1989–1997) and traveling to Bolivia to witness the work firsthand. A trusted friend, he shared decades of wisdom and generosity with our community. Beyond his global impact, Avery also served as a pastor and therapist, offering care and guidance to many.

His unwavering faith and commitment to social justice continue to inspire. We honor Avery's extraordinary legacy and the abiding love he shared with us.

**Scan the QR code to learn more about his impactful life.**



## ALLIANCE PARTNER CURAMERICAS – GUATEMALA UPDATE



Sr. Program Manager, Barbara Muffoletto, MPH recently reported that as of June 30, 2024 in Guatemala, 62% of mothers have received three or more prenatal checkups directly from the Casa Materna nurses. And 60% of expecting mothers have attended at least three pregnancy classes hosted by their respective Casa Materna. These efforts have led to increased preparedness for childbirth. Also, 71% of all mothers now

have a birth plan across all Casa Maternas. These initiatives are fostering a strong connection between pregnant women, their families and our alliance partners. Empowered women are now seeking care throughout pregnancy and childbirth, helping us to move forward in reducing maternal and neonatal mortality through accessible, high-quality and respectful care where the mother is the protagonist of her birth story.

Last year, a leadership team to Calhuitz visited a mother of three young children who was charged \$150 for an uncomplicated delivery at a state hospital for her first child. Notably, she and her baby were not offered prenatal or post-delivery follow-up checkups or prenatal classes. This mother, with her young family, then moved to Calhuitz, one of our partner communities. Her second delivery was at the Casa Materna and it was again uncomplicated. Her fee was \$50! This fee included a package of services including multiple prenatal and post-delivery checkups her newborn and her. This mother then related that her third delivery was complicated by postpartum hemorrhage and shock. With professional care including intravenous fluids and medications, both she and her baby did well. Her total fee... \$100. Her story exemplifies the quality of care at an extremely low and affordable cost provided by all the Casa Maternas, with 24-hour 7-day a week service.

# OUR ALLY IN KENYA

In recent years, KIKOP (alliance partner, Kisii region, western Kenya) has piloted various income-generating activities such as table banking\*, poultry farming, kitchen gardens, and merry-go-round/ revolving funds\*\* enhancing community cohesiveness.

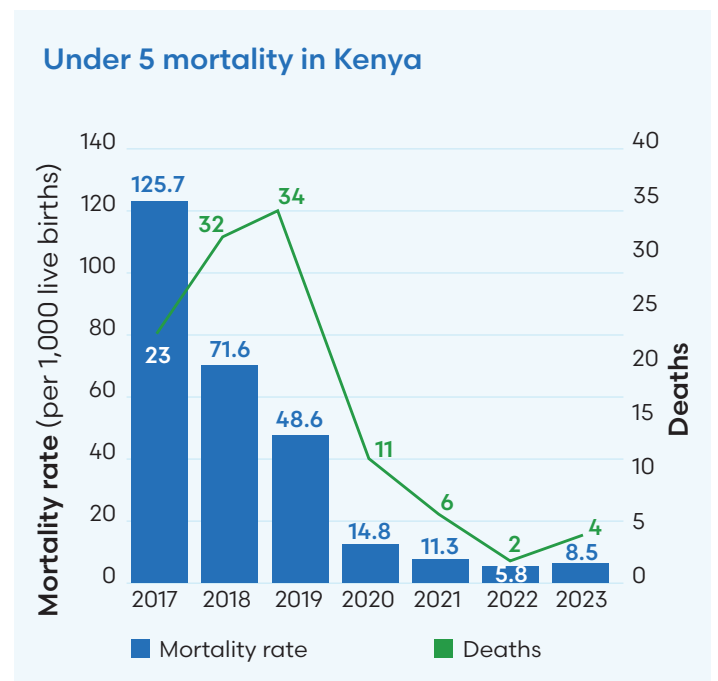
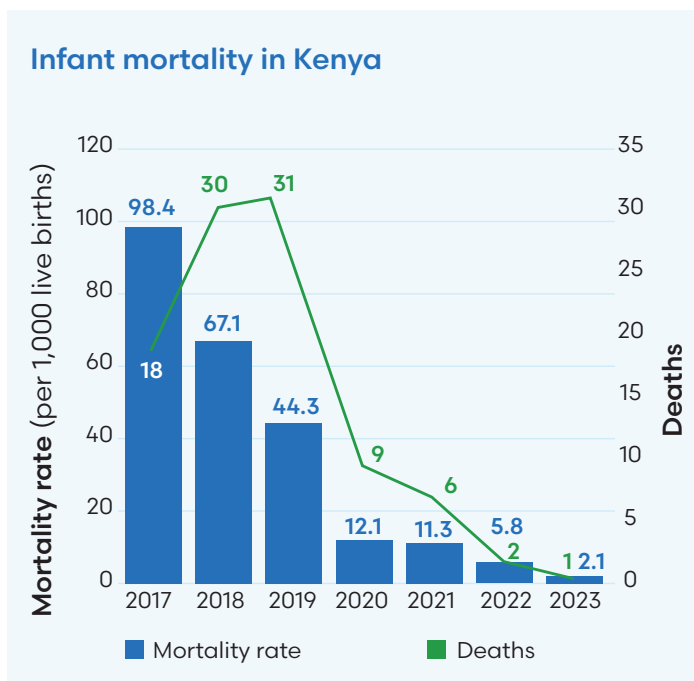
Recently KIKOP shared their activities at a USAID Nuru Ya Mtoto workshop in western Kenya, which was attended by government officials, financial leaders, and NGO (non-governmental) partners.

While income generation is not at the core of our mission, these activities further embed the alliance partners' health projects into their communities and empower women. These innovative income-generating activities are expected to be shared at an upcoming partner alliance Zoom meeting.



\*Table banking is a group-based funding system where monetary contributions are placed in a kitty from which members can borrow. Regular meetings are held, loans are approved, and defaulters are confronted. All funds are carefully tracked.

\*\*These funds are structured to ensure that any disbursed money is returned, allowing for future expenditures by other members. Funds come from various sources, such as grants and loans. Meticulous tracking of inflow and outflow of funds ensures transparency and accountability, which are paramount to its success.



## MEANINGFUL APP®

Microsoft Research partnered with Andrew Herrera and Impact Global Health Alliance to develop community tools during the pandemic. With this partnership we developed “*The Meaningful App*” a community tool and mobile application for data entry and reporting and a job aid to streamline our work. It is quietly causing a revolution among our alliance partners. The app was successfully field tested in Kenya, and this year is being implemented by additional alliance partners. *Meaningful* eliminates the first step of data entry — gone are the days of pencil and paper and then having to manually input data into Microsoft Excel. Staff workload will be reduced by thousands of hours annually, not to mention that data entry errors will also be greatly reduced.

With real-time data, *Meaningful* will support early recognition of a developing epidemic (like Ebola or mPox). Importantly, *Meaningful* can be used without Wi-Fi on smartphones and tablets — so it can be used



anywhere in the field. Another valuable aspect is its flexibility, so that the app is not limited to health-related projects. For instance, Haitian partners are using *Meaningful* to track work with students, clean water projects and vocational training while clinicians in East Africa use the tool for cervical cancer screening.

*Meaningful* may enable Impact Global Health Alliance to develop a for-profit arm. Two non-alliance partner organizations have expressed significant interest in deploying the app.

## EMPOWERING PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS — ALLIANCE PARTNER ZOOM MEETINGS

Every six weeks Impact Global Health Alliance partners meet by Zoom for two hours using real-time translation to discuss opportunities and threats to their work. The most recent pressing topic is the financial stabilization of their projects, which requires continual maintenance of political support at the local, state and national levels. Government support unfortunately ebbs and flows over the years. Today, 95% of all funding spent in Guatemala is generated from WITHIN Guatemala. Our partners in Bolivia have been wholly independent for more than 20 years. Unfortunately, Bolivia and Guatemala alliance partners are currently facing political headwinds that threaten their business model, despite providing high quality and economical health services. The income-generating activities piloted by KIKOP (mentioned above) appear to be a potential partial solution, as improving revenue sources help enhance community ownership, which undergirds political support. KIKOP’s model of income-generating activities will soon be discussed via these Zoom meetings. In the past, partners of the more mature projects (Bolivia and Guatemala) have served as principal training resources for the newer projects. But today, through these meetings, the flow of ideas may reverse direction, and come from the newer projects. In essence, the younger projects tend to be more agile and innovative, which enables everyone to consider how to best move forward.

This year, leaders from the Methodist Church of Togo, our newest alliance partner, have received on-the-ground, hands-on training in the Census-Based Impact-Oriented (CBIO+ with Care Groups and Culturally Appropriate women-centered birth) methodology and the “*Meaningful*” app by our allies in Haiti and Kenya. But the regular meetings led by Impact Global Health Alliance over the ensuing years will further strengthen their training, a boon indeed.

# HOPE THROUGH HEALTH (HTH) FOUNDATION UPDATE

Great News to report! The Hope through Health Foundation\* has more than doubled its assets in the past 2 years, and assets today exceed \$3 million! In 2025, the foundation will provide \$80,953.57 in support to Impact Global Health Alliance. There have been 130+ different donors to the foundation since its inception in 1992 and three quarters of these came in the last three years, highlighting our broad support. The growth of the Hope through Health Foundation's assets is increasingly supporting and expanding our mission of preventing unnecessary suffering for women, children and communities historically marginalized and without access to basic health care.

Rob Fields, attorney-at-law, is the Hope through Health Foundation board chair. Notably, all trustees of the Hope through Health Foundation board are former directors of Impact Global Health Alliance who completed their terms of service, and more than half of them previously served as IGHA board chairs. Assets are principally invested in The Vanguard Group, which is a leader in low-cost investing. Dr. Wes Jones has continued to honor his pledge of matching

## GET INVOLVED

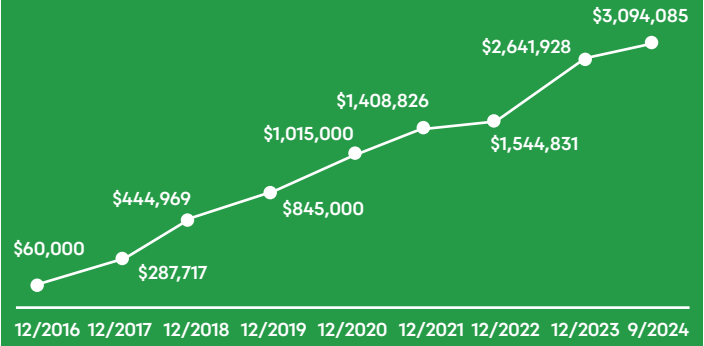
There are many ways to get involved and support our mission — whether by traveling abroad or volunteering in your own community. We welcome both small groups and large groups. In the past, we've been joined by high school, college and nursing students from all over the USA, as well as church groups and rotary clubs.

## VOLUNTEER IN YOUR COMMUNITY, CHURCH OR FROM HOME

If traveling isn't an option, there are still ways to help. There are other activities that can be done with your church or community center. You can find a full list of volunteer opportunities on our website, but here are just a few ways your group can start making a difference today. You can support us as an ambassador in your community. You can also work on special writing projects, accounting, data entry and providing feedback to our team using your skills and training. Whether you contribute your time, strategic advice, or influence — whether on a recurring basis or occasionally — every bit of your support matters.

## ENDOWMENT VALUE OVER TIME LIQUID ASSETS IN CASH OR SECURITIES

(Funds in hand)



all gifts to the HTH Foundation, dollar for dollar, until it reaches \$5 million in assets.

\*Founded in 2020, The Hope through Health Foundation is a separate 501c3 created to hold the endowment. The mission of the foundation is to support Impact Global Health Alliance and our activities to support Community-Based Public Health programs and initiatives.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Donors to Impact Global Health Alliance come from highly varied backgrounds. Drs. Beth and Bill Snyder of Waynesville, NC, are retired veterinarians with years of combined companion animal practice experience in the mountains of Western NC.



They also have a longstanding acquaintance with one of our founders, Dr. Henry Perry, as they were church members together when he resided in Waynesville. In recent years, Beth has been looking for ways to actively be an advocate for the poorest and least served around the world. When asked to become a member of the board of directors this year, she saw it as God's perfect timing, as she now had both the passion and time to devote to IGHA. In February, Beth and Bill were able to see one of our partner alliances in action, visiting the Casa Maternas (birthing centers) in the mountains of Guatemala. They witnessed firsthand the commitment of indigenous staff, the high degree of trust developed with the local residents, the cultivation of relationships with local governing bodies, and success in saving the lives of mothers and babies. In February of 2025, they plan to travel to Kenya to see how our KIKOP alliance partner is making an impact. You are invited to join them! **To learn more about volunteering abroad, contact Lisa at [LHoskins@curamericas.org](mailto:LHoskins@curamericas.org).**



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(formerly Curamericas Global)

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## MOMENTS THAT MATTER: STORIES OF IMPACT

### HANNAH KIRITSY

Hannah is a student at the Duke School of Nursing and recently returned from working in Guatemala. Hear directly from her:

These two photos are my favorites from the trip, each encapsulating a transformative moment that reshaped my life. The photo to the right, of Dr. Mario Valdez, a beacon of passion and dedication to Impact Global Health Alliance. We captured this moment after an exhilarating day in Tuxtla, where we had the profound privilege of assisting in the birth of our first baby in Guatemala. On Wednesday August 14th, our day began at dawn, around 6 AM, as we climbed into the back of Dr. Mario's truck, our hearts racing with anticipation for the scenic yet BUMPY ride up the mountainous roads to the Casa Materna. Little did we know, we were about to witness a truly remarkable birth. As the day unfolded, we engaged in ultrasounds, fundal measurements, and prenatal visits, all deepening our sense of purpose and connection to the community. Then, the moment arrived—Mama was ready to push. Without a moment's



hesitation, we joined Señora Juany and the nurses on-site, offering support and encouragement as this young mother prepared to bring her first child into the world. In that pivotal instant, while helping her change positions and providing care, I felt an undeniable calling to pursue a nursing career in labor and delivery. This entire journey ignited a flame within me—one that fuels my passion and commitment to healthcare. It was a beautiful experience that I will carry with pride as I step into my future.