



ALDEATM
STRENGTHENING MAYAN COMMUNITIES SINCE 1967

ALDEA-ABPD 2030

**A Shared Vision for Healthier Families
Through Community-Led Change**

LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP



Dear Friends,

For nearly 60 years, ALDEA has partnered with rural and Indigenous communities in Guatemala to improve family health and well-being. For the past two decades, that work has been carried out in close partnership with Asociación BPD (ABPD), our Guatemalan partner organization. Together, ALDEA and ABPD combine long-term partnership, local leadership, and a shared commitment to helping communities build healthier futures.

That commitment began with our founder, Dr. Carroll Behrhorst, whose philosophy continues to guide our work today. He believed that lasting progress could never come from outside solutions alone—it had to be shaped by the people who knew their communities best. As he wrote, "The point of our work is to seek measures that create and activate a community, rather than leave it passive and waiting. Real change requires patience and commitment."

While our values remain constant, the world around us has changed. Rural communities today face growing pressures from climate change, food insecurity, migration, and economic uncertainty. At the same time, decades of partnership have deepened our understanding of what it takes to improve family health and well-being in lasting ways.

Our vision for 2030 builds on those lessons. It reinforces the community-led approach that has always defined our work while placing greater emphasis on long-term community capacity, healthier households, and sustainable systems that continue creating opportunity long after our direct engagement ends.

This publication provides an overview of our shared vision for 2030. For a deeper look at the goals, strategies, and evidence that guide our work, we invite you to explore the full ALDEA-ABPD Strategic Plan on our website.

Together, ALDEA and ABPD remain committed to walking alongside communities as they build healthier families and stronger communities for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Sonya Fultz
ALDEA Board President

Jonathan Maupin
ABPD Board President

Sarah Cunningham
ALDEA Executive Director

Mario Aragon
ABPD Executive Director

WHY OUR WORK MATTERS



Across Guatemala, many rural and Indigenous families continue to face challenges that affect nearly every aspect of daily life. Limited access to safe water and sanitation, food insecurity, preventable illness, and unequal access to quality health services all affect family health, opportunity, and economic well-being.

These challenges are interconnected. Improving family health requires more than addressing a single need. It requires an approach that recognizes how water, health, nutrition, education, and local capacity work together to create lasting change.

A PARTNERSHIP BUILT ON SHARED PURPOSE

For decades, ALDEA and ABPD have worked alongside Indigenous and rural communities in the department of Chimaltenango. By listening, learning, and adapting alongside communities, we have gained a deeper understanding of what it takes to create lasting improvements in family health and well-being.

Our 2030 strategy brings together three interconnected pillars: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH); Healthy Households; and Community Leadership and Empowerment. Together, they strengthen family health while building the local knowledge, skills, and systems communities need to sustain progress over time.

THE REALITY IN RURAL GUATEMALA

Many families in the communities we partner with continue to face significant barriers that affect their health, well-being, and opportunities.

- More than half of Guatemala's population lives in poverty, with rates exceeding 75% in many rural Indigenous communities.
- 45% of children under five experience chronic malnutrition, the highest rate in Latin America.
- Nearly 40% of Guatemalans lack running water in their homes, with Indigenous families disproportionately affected.
- Climate change, prolonged drought, and rising food costs continue to threaten water security, agriculture, and family livelihoods.

WHAT GUIDES OUR WORK

MISSION

To collaborate with Indigenous and rural communities in Guatemala to improve the health and well-being of families through integrated initiatives.

VISION

Communities fully exercise their universal rights to health and well-being through sustainable, inclusive, and culturally rooted approaches that elevate local leadership and participation.

OUR APPROACH

We work alongside communities through three interconnected pillars: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH); Healthy Households; and Community Leadership and Empowerment. Together, they strengthen family health while building the local knowledge, leadership, and systems communities need to sustain progress long after our direct engagement ends.



SIX DECADES OF LEARNING



Our commitment to community-led development has remained constant for nearly 60 years. What has evolved is our understanding of what creates lasting improvements in family health and well-being. Experience, evaluation, and the voices of the communities we partner with have strengthened our approach and continue to shape our vision for the future.

Expanding Our Vision of Family Well-Being

Family health is shaped by many interconnected factors. While safe water remains foundational, experience has shown that lasting improvements happen when reliable water is paired with healthy household practices and strong community leadership.

Longer-Term Partnerships

Lasting change takes time. Communities now partner with us over four to five years, allowing more time to strengthen healthy household practices, develop local leadership, and prepare for long-term community ownership. By investing in stronger local systems and leadership, communities are better equipped to sustain progress long after our direct engagement ends.

Empowering Communities to Lead

Sustainable change happens when communities shape their own future. We are investing more intentionally in women, youth, community promoters, and local leaders so they have the knowledge, confidence, and opportunities to lead change within their own communities.

Measuring Lasting Change

Success isn't measured only by what is built. It's measured by what communities continue to lead and sustain long after a project ends. By strengthening long-term measurement and learning, we can better understand what works, strengthen accountability, and continuously improve our approach.

Learning and Innovating Together

Communities continue to teach us what works, and new challenges continue to shape what comes next. By listening, learning, and adapting, we remain responsive to changing community needs while staying grounded in the principles that have guided us for nearly six decades.



Community members celebrate the inauguration of the Paquixic water system, bringing reliable access to safe water to more than 270 families.

A COMMUNITY'S VISION COMES TO LIFE

For more than 70 years, Antonio and María lived without running water in their home. Like many families in Paquixic, daily life revolved around collecting the water they needed for drinking, cooking, washing, and other everyday tasks. Each day meant multiple trips to the community's water source, a routine that shaped family life for decades.

In 2026, the community gathered to celebrate the inauguration of Paquixic's new water system, the culmination of years of planning, partnership, and hard work. For Antonio and María, it was a moment they had waited a lifetime to experience. They shared with emotion what it meant to finally have safe, running water in their home and the hope it gave them for future generations of their family.

Today, the Paquixic water system provides reliable access to safe water for more than 270 families. Alongside the new system, families built improved latrines and greywater systems, learned healthy hygiene and sanitation practices, and strengthened local leadership to manage and sustain these improvements. Community members helped plan the project, dug trenches, laid pipe, and prepared to maintain the system for years to come.

Paquixic is one community, but it offers a glimpse of the future we are working toward. A future where families have greater opportunities for health and well-being because communities have the knowledge, infrastructure, and leadership to continue building on their own progress for generations to come.

BE PART OF THE JOURNEY

Join Us

For nearly 60 years, ALDEA has partnered with Indigenous and rural communities in Guatemala to improve family health and well-being. Together with ABPD, we look forward to building on that partnership in the years ahead.

Whether you're learning about our work for the first time or have been part of this journey for years, we invite you to stay connected.

Learn More

Read the full strategic plan, explore community stories, and follow our progress as we work toward our 2030 goals.



Partner With Us

Your partnership helps communities create healthier futures through locally led solutions that last. www.aldeaguatemala.org/donate

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