



**Seeds for a Future**  
Food Security + Nutrition Solutions

# 2025 IMPACT REPORT





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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FROM OUR FOUNDER .....	1
ABOUT GUATEMALA .....	2-3
ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY .....	4
ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION .....	5
PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....	6
FROM OUR PROGRAM LEADER .....	7
ON THE GROUND IN GUATEMALA .....	8
FROM OUR MEMBERS .....	9
SERVICE AREA .....	11
SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS .....	12
PARTNERSHIPS .....	13
FROM OUR DONORS .....	14
BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	15
ADMIN AND OPERATIONS .....	16
FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR .....	17





## A NOTE FROM SUZANNE DE BERGE

CO-FOUNDER AND BOARD PRESIDENT

### Dear Friends,

When we began this journey in 2009, Seeds for a Future was a humble attempt to reduce the rates of nutrition-related disease we witnessed across the Guatemalan countryside in Suchitepéquez. Our vision was simple yet urgent: to provide nutrition education and food security to families who were too often overlooked.

Under the leadership of Armando Astorga, Program Director of Semillas para el Futuro, our once-budding organization has grown into a cross-community and even cross-departmental effort. What started small has flourished into a team of more than a dozen dedicated professionals who have reached nearly 6,000 households. Together, they have planted backyard gardens, introduced families to nutritious crops, and shown them how to prepare fresh produce for healthier meals.

This impact report reflects not only the growth of our organization but, more importantly, the transformation of the families we serve. You'll find stories of resilience and progress—stories of parents and children who are taking steps toward healthier, more hopeful lives. Their progress represents more than improved nutrition; it opens doors to greater opportunity and a brighter future.

As you read on, please know that your support is at the heart of this success. Walking alongside our team and the families we serve has planted seeds of opportunity that directly improve lives. Thank you for your companionship on this journey and for making a lasting difference for families you may never meet, but whose futures are brighter because of you.

With gratitude,  
**Suzanne de Berge**  
Co-Founder, Board President

## UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT



### THE REALITY OF “THE LAND OF ETERNAL SPRING”

Guatemala faces overlapping challenges of malnutrition, poverty, and climate risk.

Seeds for a Future works in some of the country’s most affected departments, where families are turning knowledge into resilience.

Across Guatemala, families face deep-rooted challenges in food security and health. Program members face these realities, community by community, family by family, garden by garden, seed by seed.



**47%**  
of children under five are stunted.

Guatemala has one of the highest chronic malnutrition rates worldwide.



**2 IN 3**  
families live on less than US\$2/day.

Extreme poverty limits access to basic resources like food and clean water.



**TOP 10**  
most climate vulnerable countries globally.

Droughts, storms, and floods threaten rural livelihoods.



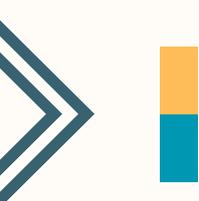
**US\$12B**  
annual cost of malnutrition’s “double burden”.

Undernutrition and obesity strain the national economic productivity.



**60–70%**  
of children are malnourished in Sololá and Quiché.

Two regions where Seeds for a Future focuses its work.



## CORE STATS ABOUT GUATEMALA: FOOD SECURITY, MALNUTRITION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In Guatemala, **46.5% of children under five** are stunted, reflecting one of the highest chronic malnutrition rates in the world. Of the country's **16.3 million people, nearly two-thirds live on less than US \$2 per day**, and Guatemala ranks among the **10 countries most vulnerable to climate disasters**. This “double burden” of undernutrition and rising obesity **costs the nation more than US \$12 billion annually**, deepening cycles of poverty and poor health.

Seeds for a Future **addresses these challenges in a variety of rural departments** including Suchitepéquez, Sololá, Escuintla, and Quiché, where food insecurity and malnutrition reach their most severe levels:

- **Suchitepéquez // Child malnutrition exceeds 60%** in some communities. Families rely on corn and beans, with little access to vegetables or protein. Contaminated water worsens illness, and **families seek ways to diversify diets** and earn income through small-scale food projects.
- **Sololá //** Among Indigenous Maya families, **malnutrition surpasses 70%**. Steep terrain and poor market access limit food production. Communities ask for training, garden tools, and safe-water solutions to **strengthen food security at home**.
- **Escuintla //** Despite fertile farmland, rural families lack nutritious options. With **malnutrition near 50%**, most depend on cheap processed foods. Families call for practical ways to improve household nutrition and **create women-led income opportunities**.
- **Quiché //** One of the most vulnerable regions, with **child malnutrition above 70%**. Poverty, isolation, and limited infrastructure restrict access to food, health, and education. Families request seeds, gardens, and small livestock to build self-sufficiency.

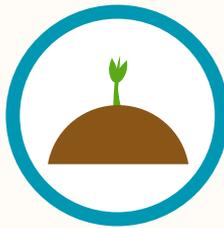
### Meeting the Need

Across these departments, families consistently ask for nutritious food, clean water, affordable diet improvements, and income opportunities close to home. Seeds for a Future **addresses these needs with simple, sustainable, community-led solutions**. To date, the program has reached more than 38,000 individuals, helping families **move from scarcity toward health, resilience, and opportunity**.

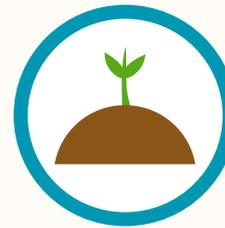
# ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY



**2009**  
Founded by  
Suzanne and  
Earl de Berge



**2011**  
Program expands  
into four new  
departments



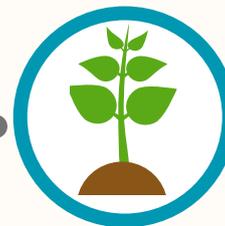
**2015**  
Introduction of  
the First 1,000  
Days Program



**2018**  
Release of  
INCAP study  
with verified  
impact data

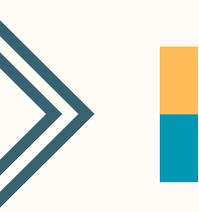


**2020**  
Over 2,900 families  
participating in  
twelve  
Communities



**2025**  
Nearly 6,000  
families  
empowered with  
lifelong skills





## ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

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Seeds for a Future is a U.S.–based nonprofit that partners with its Guatemalan sister NGO, Semillas para el Futuro, to address one of the most urgent challenges in Latin America: chronic malnutrition disease. Since its founding in 2009, Seeds for a Future has built a proven, community–driven model that enhances both food security and economic opportunities.

The program equips families with the knowledge, skills, and resources to cultivate small but powerful household gardens designed to grow nutrient–rich foods, referred to as “backyard farms.” Families also receive guidance on preparing balanced meals, improving household hygiene, and generating income through micro–enterprises.

### Program Reach and Impact

- Active in 21 communities across 8 departments
- Nearly 6,000 households reached, impacting over 38,000 individuals.
- Families increase dietary diversity with crops like chaya, amaranth, and peppers, while surplus produce generates additional income.
- Local extensionists are leaders trained within the community who ensure the delivery of culturally relevant and sustainable programs.
- Members pay GTQ 10 (\$1.25) each month, as families *choose* to invest in their future. A small fee ensures their dignity is respected, while covering some costs for inputs, learning materials, and more.

### Why It Matters

Seeds for a Future directly addresses the needs families have voiced: access to nutritious food, clean water, affordable ways to improve diets, and opportunities to earn income without leaving their communities. By combining nutrition education with economic development, the program helps families break the cycle of poverty while strengthening their resilience.

### The Path Forward

With continued support, Seeds for a Future will expand its reach to thousands more families in Guatemala’s most vulnerable regions. Each household that plants a backyard farm represents more than food; it represents health, dignity, and opportunity for future generations.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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Rural Guatemalan families face chronic malnutrition, poverty, and limited resources. Exemplifying United Nations Development Goals 1, 2, and 3, our program helps them grow nutritious food, improve health, and create income sources that build resilience.

### How It Works

A 12-month mentorship model provides weekly in-home training, hands-on support, and starter resources. Families establish gardens, raise small animals, and adopt sustainable practices that become part of daily life. As they gain confidence, they share knowledge with neighbors, multiplying the impact.

### Core Elements

- **Food Security** – Gardens, fruit trees, and small livestock provide fresh, reliable nutrition.
- **Health Education** – Training reduces illness, prevents stunting, and promotes balanced diets.
- **Micro-Businesses** – Surplus produce creates income and financial stability.

### Impacts

- Nearly 6,000 families in 19 communities completed the program by 2025.
- Families report improved food security, greater health, and new income opportunities.
- An INCAP study (2014–2017) showed a 90% reduction in childhood anemia, a strong indicator of malnutrition, among participants.
- Over 80% of families sustain practices years after graduating.

### Outcomes

Families gain food security, healthier diets, and new income streams, strengthening households and building more self-reliant communities.

## Goal 1

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

## Goal 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

## Goal 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



**FROM OUR  
PROGRAM LEADER**

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## **A NOTE FROM MOISÉS PASTOR**

**PROGRAM MANAGER,  
SEMILLAS PARA EL FUTURO**

### **To Our Partners in Success,**

Since the beginning of the Program, we have witnessed a remarkable transformation within the communities. It is not only about providing resources, but about re-empowering families to take control of their own nutrition and food security.

The program has laid the foundation for community resilience. Each participating family is proof that sustainable change comes through practical action. We are replacing dependency with self-sufficiency, and cycles of malnutrition with opportunities for families to live better.

Families are learning to make the most of their available space, using sustainable agriculture

techniques alongside small-scale poultry raising. This ensures steady access to a diet rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals.

True change happens in the kitchen and at the family table. We are helping families adopt healthier habits, showing them how the food they grow directly translates into their children's health and an improved quality of life for adults.

By producing their own food, families not only eat better but also significantly reduce their expenses. In many cases, the surplus from the home garden becomes a new source of income. The Backyard Farm also serves as a training and demonstration center for neighboring families, ensuring that knowledge spreads organically and sustainably. We want the impact we see today among participating families to multiply, turning entire communities into zones free of malnutrition.

I deeply appreciate the dedication of the participating families and our Team. Together, we are building a future where health and nutrition are rights that every family cultivates with their own hands.

Saludos,

**Moisés Pastor**  
Program Manager  
Semillas Para el Futuro

## ON THE GROUND IN GUATEMALA 2024-25



**Armando**  
*Program Director*

2009; Country-wide support, Program development



**Don Julio**  
*Sr. Field Team Member*

2010; Chocolá, Team management, member success



**Moisés**  
*Program Manager*

2018; Chocolá, Program and operations management



**Sandra**  
*Sr. Field Team Member*

2021; Chocolá, Team and member success



**Carmelina**  
*Sr. Field Team Member*

2024; Sta. Maria Visitación, Community Leader



**Lucio**  
*Sr. Field Team Member*

2024; Multiple towns, Botany and horticulture



**Erminia**  
*Field Team Member*

2024; Multiple towns, Horticulture and botany



**Sucily**  
*Field Team Member*

2024; Chocolá, Seed nursery and horticulture



**Ada**  
*Field Team Member*

2025; Sta. Bárbara, Community success and horticulture



**Jonas**  
*Field Team Member*

2025; Sta. Maria Visitación, Botany and horticulture



**Candelaria**  
*Field Team Member*

2025; Sto. Tomás la Unión, Botany and horticulture



**Ana**  
*Field Team Member*

2025; Chocolá, Horticulture and community

## FROM OUR PROGRAM MEMBERS

The heart of this program lies in the families who put knowledge into action every day. Their resilience, determination, and creativity drive real and lasting change in their households and communities. The following testimonials come directly from program participants, and serve as powerful reminders that with the right tools and opportunities, families can overcome challenges and build brighter futures.



“Having a garden, fruit trees, and raising animals have complemented my family's diet and nutrition; the spaces that are now full of food before were full of garbage. The training I have received to be better every day has been very helpful. This I have taught my family because at first only I took care of things, but when they realized how important the plants and animals were for us, my family started to help me.” – **Rosenda Cumar**



“Through savings, we improved the kitchen with a water filter so that our family does not get sick from taking water from the faucet. This saves money and the time that is lost by boiling the water, as well as damaging the environment.” – **Maribel Macario y Esvin Tzunun**



“When they teach us how to work, we all win. Since I started with the project, I am taking advantage of the opportunities that my family has to eat and live well. Animals and plants adorn my house and at the same time, feed me. I do not have to go to the market to spend time and money because I have what I need in my garden.” – **Mirna Yaque Gómez**

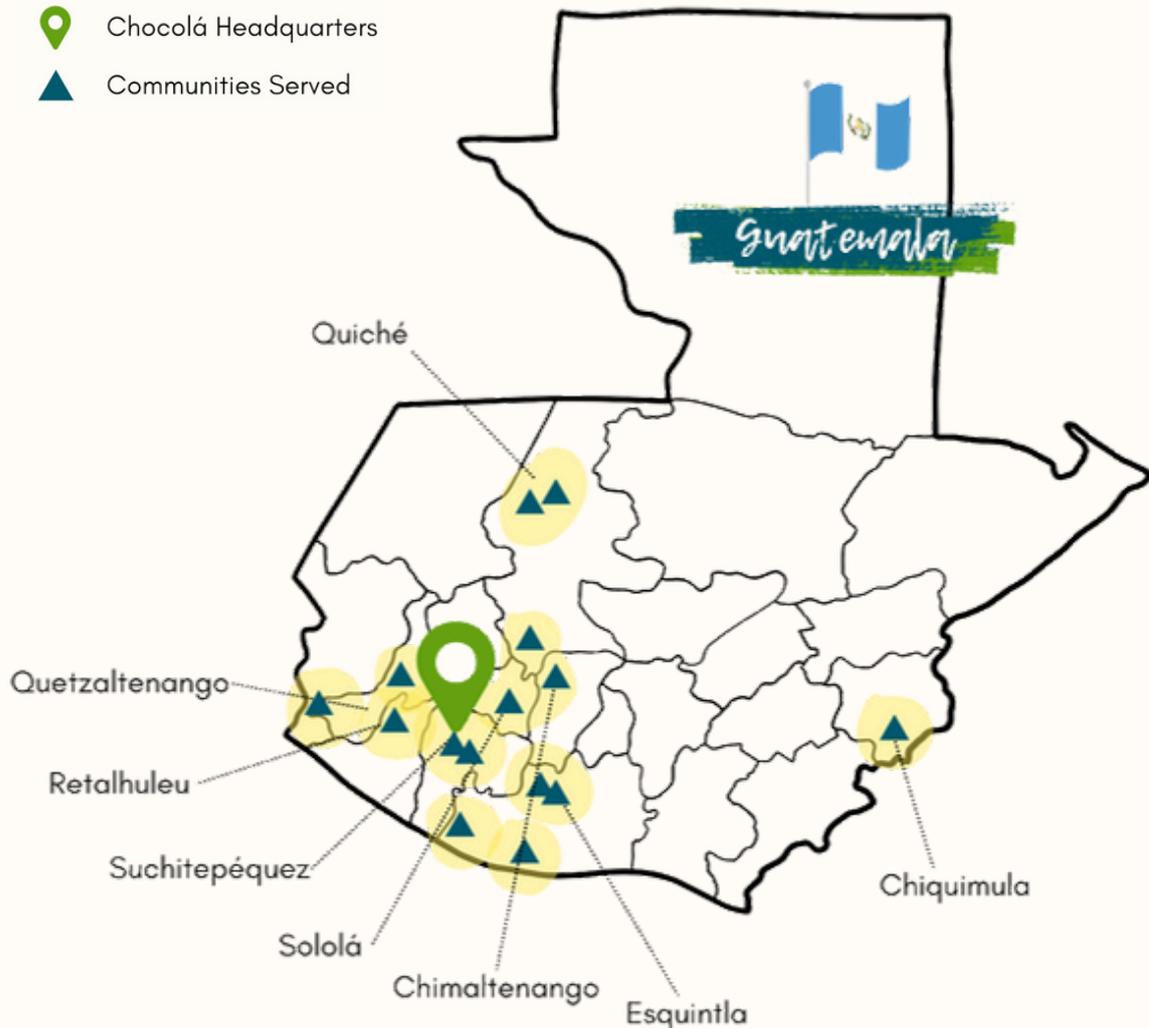


“With the backyard farm, we have more meat to eat and also that we can sell. This generates an income that helps us in the education of our children or other things that we can use at home. I tell other women of the community to participate because the benefit is for us, and we do not expect them to bring us things as gifts. We will organize ourselves and get tomato seeds to diversify our crops, and with the training, we are learning how to raise seedlings.” – **Patricia Magdalena Cifuentes**



## SERVICE AREA

-  Chocolá Headquarters
-  Communities Served



### KEY IMPACT METRICS 2024-25

- **Communities Reached:** 23 (8 new communities)
- **Gardens Planted:** Nearly 300
- **Family Members Served:** Nearly 2,000
- **Poultry Distributed:** 365 chickens
- **Water Filters Distributed:** 200
- **Women's Health Screenings Hosted:** 2 (pilot)
- **Schools Partnered With:** 3 (pilot)





## 2024-25 SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Nurturing Communities & Growth

This year, Seeds for a Future reached 23 communities, including 8 new communities. There are nearly 2,000 family members now growing food across 265+ gardens, improving nutrition, and strengthening local resilience.

In Suchitepéquez, our primary focus area, families deepened their food security practices through gardens, poultry care, and nutrition education. Meanwhile, in Sololá, 127 families joined the program this year.

We also expanded into Santa Bárbara, where many households are led by women after male family members migrated for income opportunities. These women are becoming heads of household, taking on responsibilities such as providing for and growing food for their families, while inspiring others to do the same.

At the community level, schools are becoming key spaces to connect children with their food sources. Our school garden initiative, currently serving three schools, helps students plant, harvest, and enjoy their own produce in school cafeterias, reinforcing a connection to food, healthy habits, and hands-on nutrition learning.

### Quality of Life Improvements Through Partnership

Collaboration is fuel for impact. This year, local and national partners played a vital role in expanding access to health services, water, and

empowerment programs across rural Guatemala.

Together with Water4Life, we distributed 200 water filters, ensuring clean, safe drinking water for hundreds of families. With WINGS, we co-hosted two women's health clinics in Chocolá and Santo Tomás La Unión, offering cervical screenings and education to build trust and promote reproductive health.

Through The M Story, our reach grew into Santa Bárbara Suchitepéquez, where 40 new families chose self-empowerment. These partnerships not only strengthen access to services but build community trust and shared capacity for long-term change.

### Resource Development & Team Empowerment

Behind every thriving garden and healthy family is a dedicated Field Team member who motivates growth. This year, our team expanded to serve eight new towns and took on greater leadership responsibilities.

By harvesting and nurturing their own seeds rather than buying from suppliers, the Team reduced input costs for families and modeled sustainable, self-reliant practices. Field leaders also supported one another's professional growth through mentorship, cultural exchange, and on-the-ground problem-solving, ensuring that each community receives context-aware, empowering guidance.

Their collective growth is both a reflection of and a driver for Seeds for a Future's success: a testament to what's possible when local leadership takes root.

## PARTNERSHIPS GUATEMALA + USA



### the M Story

The M Story empowers families with tools and knowledge to overcome malnutrition and poverty. Partnering, we expanded the program into Santa Barbara Suchitepéquez and now serve 40 new families with new members weekly.



### Water4Life

Water4Life empowers women and delivers clean water, and education that ensures sustainable, community-driven impact in Guatemala. In partnership, we have distributed 200 water filters across five of the communities Seeds for a Future serves.



### WINGS

WINGS advances reproductive and sexual health, providing education, services, and programs that expand care and break cycles of poverty. Together, we hosted two women's clinics in the department of Suchitepéquez in 2025.



### Arizona Community Foundation

Arizona Community Foundation connects donors with causes that matter, managing charitable funds, advancing equity, and supporting initiatives that strengthen communities across Arizona and beyond.



### Arizona Impact for Good

Arizona Impact for Good unites businesses and nonprofits to drive community impact, fostering collaboration, social responsibility, and sustainable solutions that strengthen lives across Arizona.



### Population Connection

Population Connection promotes global sustainability, advocating for reproductive health, family planning, and education to reduce poverty and protect the environment for future generations.



# A NOTE FROM MARK WALKER

**LONG-TERM DONOR  
AND BOARD MEMBER**

## **To Our Community of Supporters,**

My connection to Guatemala began more than 50 years ago as a Peace Corps volunteer. Since then, this country has remained central to my life; it's where I met my wife, raised my children, and witnessed both the challenges and resilience of its people.

I first learned about Seeds for a Future through its co-founders, Suzanne and Earl de Berge. Their bottom-up approach to addressing malnutrition and poverty immediately resonated with me. What began as a conversation about fundraising grew into personal support, then donorship, and ultimately led to my service on the board.

What inspires me most about Seeds is the way families take ownership of their own futures. With knowledge, resources, and

mentoring, they are not dependent on charity, but are building health, food security, and economic stability from within their communities. This kind of transformation is both sustainable and deeply empowering.

I believe in Seeds for a Future because I've seen the difference it makes. Gardens flourish, children grow healthier, and families become more self-reliant. It is an honor to serve as Board Chair for Fundraising and to contribute to an organization I deeply believe in.

Together, we can continue expanding this impact, supporting families who are ready to build brighter, healthier futures.

In thanks,

### **Mark Walker**

Board Member, Committee Chair  
Seeds for a Future

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Suzanne de Berge**  
*President & Treasurer*

Suzanne guides strategy, finances, and governance with decades of leadership in nonprofit management, business, and community development.



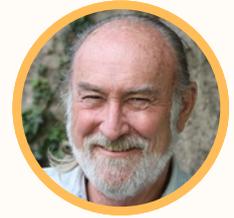
**Joy Mee**  
*Vice President*

Joy offers deep experience in planning, policy, and women's leadership, strengthening community-driven governance and financial resilience.



**Mark Walker**  
*Secretary,  
Fundraising Chair*

Mark is a seasoned development leader and author who advances strategic fundraising with a lifelong passion for change.



**Earl de Berge**  
*Co-Founder*

Earl contributes expertise in research, evaluation, and communications, blending analytical rigor with creativity as a writer, poet, and artist.



**Karen Kahn**  
*Board Member*

Karen, a pioneering airline captain, brings innovative, practical thinking and a trailblazing spirit to program evaluation and development.



**Benjamin Lee**  
*Board Member*

Ben, an international educator and school leader, champions unity, collaboration, and shared purpose through a global cross-cultural lens.



**Alfredo Toriello**  
*Board Member*

Alfredo draws on his business background in sustainable organic agriculture, rural infrastructure, and eco-tourism to support locally led impact.



**Jim Barlow**  
*Board Member*

Jim, a globally recognized agronomist, shares expertise in soil ecology, crop production, and sustainable farming across emerging markets.

## ADMIN AND OPERATIONS



**Leilani Yats**

**Executive Director**

As Executive Director, Leilani Yats guides strategy, partnerships, and fundraising, leading the U.S. team and supporting the Guatemalan team to embolden the organization's health and sustainability.



**Christopher Warren**

**Development Director**

As Development Director, Christopher Warren leads fundraising and donor engagement, building partnerships that expand Seeds for a Future's impact. He also manages all aspects of tech and supports marketing efforts.



**Vivien Varga**

**Marketing Lead**

As Marketing Lead, Vivien Varga shapes communications and outreach, sharing Seeds for a Future's mission and impact with diverse audiences. She also supports branding, strategy, and communications.



**Lisa Massey**

**Accounting**

As our trusted Bookkeeper, Lisa Massey manages finances with accuracy and care, ensuring Seeds for a Future's resources are used effectively to support its mission. She does this for both the U.S. and Guatemalan teams.

## VOLUNTEER DREAM TEAM

By sharing their talents, volunteers expand our reach, build connections, and ensure that more families gain the tools and confidence to thrive. Their dedication is a vital force bringing recognition to our resilient communities.

**Mila, Australia**

*March 2024*

supporting Spanish-to-English translation, admin, and more.

**Evette, Florida**

*June 2024*

Supporting social media

**Melanie, Georgia**

*July 2024*

Supporting Spanish-to-English translation

**Ayla, Florida**

*July 2024*

Supporting general admin and research



# A NOTE FROM LEILANI YATS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dear Comunidad Valorada,**

Living and working in Guatemala has offered the privilege of seeing firsthand both the daily lives and **the extraordinary resilience of rural communities**. Every day, I witness reminders that when families are given the tools, resources, and opportunity to provide for themselves, they can not only rebuild the health of entire households but also thrive with **renewed confidence and dignity**.

Since joining the Seeds for a Future team in early 2023, it has been humbling to witness the tenacity of our sister organization, **Semillas para el Futuro**, and the determination of the families we serve. Their perseverance affirms what we know to be true: **lasting change happens when communities lead the way**.

Our work is far from over. Each week we receive requests from new

families eager to join the Program, and more recently, **inquiries from leaders and organizations around the world** interested in replicating our model. This momentum is a powerful reminder that even in uncertain times, we are **collectively moving forward to find solutions**, persevering and supporting one another's success.

To each of you who has walked alongside us, whether by sharing our mission, giving generously, or simply offering encouragement, please **know that you are an integral part of this greater international community**. Your support is helping overlooked families not just survive, but truly thrive. For this, we are deeply grateful.

With gratitude and hope,  
**Leilani Yats**  
Executive Director



**Seeds for a Future**

Food Security + Nutrition Solutions

# THANK YOU



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