



BEHRHORST PARTNERS FOR DEVELOPMENT **SPRING 2012**



**BPD**

# Enhancing Programs to Reduce Malnutrition

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**W**e know all too well that one of the largest problems facing Guatemalans is chronic malnutrition, especially in rural areas and especially for the Mayans. According to the United Nations, Guatemala has the worst malnutrition rate in Latin America, and it has ranked sixth in the world for several years now, with rates of over 50% for children under five years of age.

Chimaltenango is no exception, with almost 54% of its children under age five with chronic malnutrition (MINEDUC 2008) – a number that reaches more than 70% in some of its municipalities. In fact, it is the sixth worst department in the country when it comes to malnutrition.

Turning the problem around is not easy. Chimaltenango residents lack access to enough land to cultivate, as well as to training in agriculture, nutrition and family planning. Making matters worse, Guatemala is being severely affected by climate change—the United Nations has declared it the second country in the

*Continued on inside*







## CREATE GOOD FOUNDATION GIFT INCREASES ABPD'S CAPACITY

In December, Create Good Foundation, an organization committed to helping the lives of poor people who live and work in coffee growing regions around the world, joined with Behrhorst Partners for Development through an investment of \$225,000. These funds will be used to help construct schools in two villages; and gray water filters, improved latrines and vented stoves in several other villages where we already built water projects but didn't have the funding to complete the entire Health Homes projects. This generous investment in our work allows us to increase our capacity so that we can help even more rural families live healthier lives.

It has been 50 years since Dr. Carroll Behrhorst first began his work, standing side by side Kaqchikel Mayans to improve the health and well-being of children, families, and communities in rural Guatemala. That alliance, formed half a century ago, continues strong today because



Create Good Foundation provided the funding for the water project in El Durazno, which was completed last October.

of organizations like Create Good Foundation—and good people like you.

Check back to our website and Facebook page from time to time to read updates on how all of us working together are saving and improving lives in rural Guatemala.

*Cover story continued*

world most vulnerable to climate change. Changing weather conditions and events plague the most vulnerable populations year after year, destroying their harvests and infrastructure, and leading inevitably to a struggle for consistent, proper nutrition.

At ABPD we are making nutrition the main work focus for our new strategic plan starting in July, including particular emphasis on water and sanitation as key to improving nutrition conditions.

In the past few years our strong family centers have been very successful in battling chronic malnutrition. The rates among the population involved in this program are significantly lower than for the surrounding communities. Now, to build on that success, we will take a new approach that impacts more families for a more extended period of time. Our goal is to empower the community so that extended support from ABPD—or other outside groups—won't be necessary. We will focus on the empowerment and leadership of women and youth, education and access to family planning methods, adaptation to climate change, and—one of our strengths—work on water and sanitation (which helps reduce gastrointestinal diseases and improves intake of nutrition).

This work, challenging as it is for our staff, allies,

donors and communities, will help ABPD's impact to be even more significant on the population we work with. Through hard work and support, learning from others and from our own endeavors and innovation, I believe we will become a better organization in combating the core problem of malnutrition.

By this summer, we'll be able to say that ABPD supported more than 1,500 families through our current programs in this fiscal year, taking water, sanitation and hygiene to their homes and improving nutrition through the strong family centers. We were also able to provide much-needed humanitarian interventions after tropical depression 12E in October, which once more caused devastation in the villages' crops.

Thanks to our donors, partners and allies, including the past and present local governments, we have been able to implement these critical activities. We look forward to working together with you to make an even greater, more lasting impact.

Paco Enríquez  
Executive Director





## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Dear Friends and Partners of BPD,

**A**s we do every few years, we took time last November to review and update our strategic plan. When we gathered health-related data, it became clear that chronic childhood malnutrition is the major health-related problem in the department of Chimaltenango—as it is across Guatemala. As with other social and economic challenges, malnutrition is far worse among the indigenous population than the non-indigenous and worse in rural communities as compared to urban areas.

Before developing our strategic plan we reviewed the literature, conferred with village development committees and evaluated our programs to ensure that we will use our resources wisely while implementing the most effective practices. Our vision is that communities become empowered and capable of culturally pertinent and equitable development that guarantees their right to health and well-being. To achieve that vision, ABPD will partner with communities, forge strategic alliances with the government and other



NGOs, empower communities with a special focus on women and adolescents, implement evidence-based interventions and periodically document and evaluate our work. Most importantly, we will strive to ensure that development activities are sustainable and cost-effective so that we are the best steward of our donors' money.

Our overarching strategic objective for the next three years is to reduce childhood chronic malnutrition in communities where ABPD works. The strategies to achieve this objective are summarized in the accompanying graphic.

Some of our basic strategies remain the same: Providing running water, basic sanitation and vented stoves as these are all known to have a positive impact on nutrition. We will enhance other existing strategies, such as providing nutrition education and access to family planning methods. And, finally, we will launch new, cross cutting strategies: increasing community empowerment, with an emphasis on training woman to become more active decision-makers; and training young people to participate in community development as they are often agents of change.

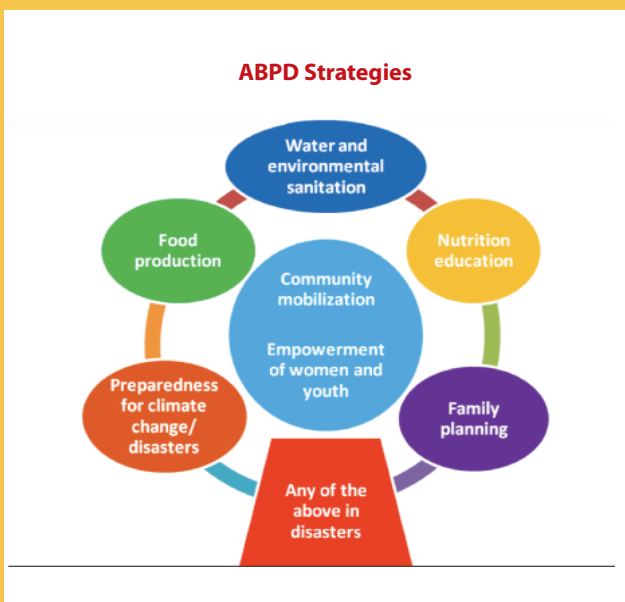
To ensure success, we will also strengthen our institutional capacity, re-training staff as necessary, monitoring and evaluating our strategies, and developing a system that ensures community voices are an integral part of our planning and programming. We also hope to improve our reporting to you, our donors, by measuring results as well as reporting on activities.

I thank all of you for your belief in our programs and continuing support. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at [BoardPresident@Behrhorst.org](mailto:BoardPresident@Behrhorst.org).

Best,

Victoria Ward

BPD Board President





## Armira's Story

**M**y name is Armira Xicay and I live in El Durazno, a village located in San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango. My husband is Otto Leopoldo Xicay and we have three kids: Claudia Carolina, age seven, Santos Fidel, age 5, and Dulce Gregoria who is one year old. My elderly parents also live with us.

Just a few months ago, our biggest problem was the lack of running water at home. Every morning, I would have to get up at 4 a.m. and walk about two kilometers to fetch water. The path was narrow, hard to walk and very muddy during the rainy season. It took a half-hour each way if I walked fast. There was not a single day when I did not have to make several hour-long trips a day for water to prepare food for my family. Water was a treasure for us—we took care of each drop as if it was the last one. During the dry season the water almost disappeared, so in the rainy season we tried to harvest as much water as we could, so at least I did not need to go to the nearest river to do my laundry. We even used this water for drinking.

Hauling water is hard work and I have been doing it since I was a child. However, I did not want this for my children, which is why we asked ABPD for support. We learned just a few months ago that we soon would have running water in our village. In the few months it took to construct the water system, my life has changed completely. Water is no longer a problem. The exhausting days spent carrying water are over. My husband, children, parents and I are very happy and thankful to God and to ABPD for changing our lives. I do not need to get up at 4 a.m. to fetch water. I can now sleep until 5 a.m. and still have time to bathe and make breakfast for my children before they go to school. They get up at 6 a.m. and leave our home clean and fed. Just a few days ago, this would have been impossible. I have more time now to look after my parents.

I only need to open the tap and the water is there! I have enough for my vegetables and flowers and also for my animals—chickens and a pig. They need water, too, but this was not possible before. ABPD also gave us an Eco-filter so now we even have purified drinking water. We received training on how to use it and keep it clean. It is very useful because we do not



need to boil water anymore, which saves time and firewood.

All this came together with the water project, but there is even more! ABPD also helped us build efficient stoves. My stove is built and I am so happy because I will not cook again using an open fire on the floor. I will not have eye problems because of the smoke and my coughing will stop. The best thing is we are not going to need lots of firewood, which is very limited and expensive. I cannot wait to use my stove. It is beautiful but I have to wait 20 days until the concrete is totally dry.

Thank you, ABPD. All this has been so good for us. This is something we will be able to leave for our children.



### BPD donors are saying...

We decided to partner with BPD because they have years of water and sanitation expertise in rural Guatemala and have proven over time to be highly effective and efficient. BPD is an excellent partner for Create Good as we strive to bring sustainable clean water to rural Guatemalan families.

— Sam Snyder - Create Good Foundation







## BPD Announces New Development Director

**W**e are pleased to announce that Behrhorst Partners for Development has successfully recruited Jennifer Turck as its new Director of Development. Jennifer has served as a resource development professional for more than twenty years, working with a variety of non-profits including international health care and children's charities. Jennifer brings to BPD experience in cultivation and stewardship of donor relationships, as well as expertise in developing new programs for annual, major and planned gifts.

"The BPD Board is excited to introduce Jennifer Turck as our Director of Development," said board director, Sonya Fultz. "Not only does she bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the organization, but she brings a passion to her work that will change lives in rural Guatemala."

As director, Jennifer will expand development efforts, connecting donors with BPD partners, and building up a national network of support. Since 1995, she has main-



tained credentials as a certified fund raising executive (CFRE). Jennifer holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Binghamton University, where she teaches as an adjunct professor in the College of Community and Public Affairs. She is also a frequent conference presenter for organizations such as the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP) and Association for Fundraising Professionals (AFP).

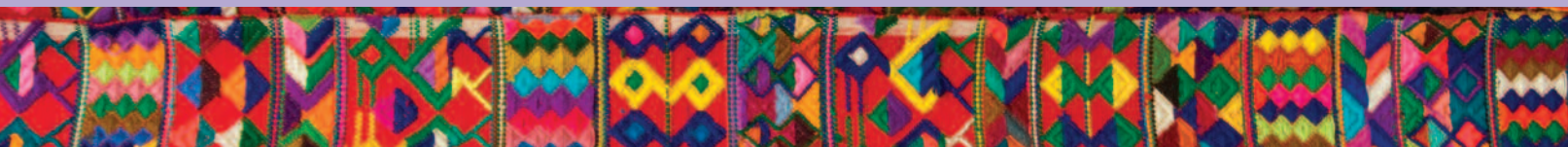
Jennifer is active in philanthropy as a volunteer as well. She serves on several non-profit boards, and as the founding president for Leave a Legacy® and as president-elect of the United Way for Cortland County. She lives in upstate New York with her husband and three children.

"We are so pleased to welcome Jennifer Turck to our very small but dedicated team," said BPD board president, Victoria Ward. "Jennifer comes to us with a wealth of experience in fundraising and has already generated lots of ideas about how we can more effectively let people know about the needs in Guatemala and what they can do to help."

## Guatemala: Health and Nutrition at a Glance

According to the World Bank, chronic malnutrition is "the only indicator that has not improved, and in that regard Guatemala unfortunately has one of the worst indicators in the world." Here are some other facts from the World Health Organization:

- Guatemala has the third highest rate of stunting in the world and Mayans have disproportionately high rates of stunting compared to other ethnic groups
- 1/3 of child deaths are due to under-nutrition as under-nourished children who fall ill are more likely to die.
- Children who are undernourished between conception and age two are a high risk for impaired cognitive development
- 1 in 8 infants are born with a low birth weight which puts them at great risk of having chronic health problems such as heart disease and diabetes



Newsletters are occasional publications of Behrhorst Partners for Development, 2411 S. Superior St., Milwaukee, WI 53207. The non-sectarian, nonpolitical organization is a network of friends dedicated to continuing the labor begun by Dr. Carroll Behrhorst in 1962, promoting health and development, especially among the rural poor of Highland Guatemala. Tax-deductible contributions to Behrhorst Partners for Development are forwarded directly to projects, except for the minimal amount required to provide for advocacy.

**For more information:**

Susan Slater, US Coordinator

(414) 483-0728

BehrhorstUS@yahoo.com

www.Behrhorst.org

Guatemalan editor: Marily Giron

U.S. Editor: Susan Slater



**BPD**

**Behrhorst Partners for Development**

2411 S. Superior St.

Milwaukee, WI 53207

**Community members are saying...**

"We have never seen an institution that works several projects at a time. Now we have a spigot at home and our children will not suffer due to lack of running water anymore."

—*Ramona Paredes - Patzocon.*

**BPD Board**

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The mayor of Patzun, Mardoqueo Cancax, joins Rick and Elin Lawrence of Manchester, CT at the ceremony signifying completion of the water system in Popabaj in February. Thanks to US Rotary Clubs in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Oregon, Guatemalan Families Association in the UK, and several individuals 90 families now have running water in their homes as well as improved latrines and vented stoves.