



“We like Seeds for a Future very much because it does not just give us things, but it teaches us.”



More Than Aid: Cultivating a Sustainable Culture of Health and Self-Reliance

Since 2009, Seeds for a Future's Program has provided rural Guatemalans with the training and start-up resources they need to transform their lives.

The long-term impacts of the Program include:

- Sustainable and nutritious food security
- Healthier lives from prenatal to old age
- Better futures and stronger communities

Let's explore the challenges and the community-led solutions.

What are the Challenges Facing Rural Guatemalans?

For many generations, rural Guatemalan communities have faced:

- The constant threat of food insecurity
- Severe health issues due to chronic malnutrition, such as physical and cognitive stunting, weakened immune systems, and frequent illness
- Limited income-earning opportunities and low family income

Guatemala Statistics 2024:

- Almost 50% of children under 5 years suffer from chronic malnutrition
- Guatemala is ranked one of the highest in the world for stunting.
- Nationally, 46.5% of children under 5 suffer from stunting, with some areas in Guatemala reaching rates between 70 and 90%.

Lifelong Impacts of Malnutrition:

- Stunting -- the most visible effect of malnutrition -- foreshadows a lifetime of poor cognition and educational performance, increased childhood mortality from common diseases, and low adult earning power.
- Malnutrition's effects ripple through generations, undermining the health, wealth, and opportunities of families, communities, and regions.



How is Seeds for a Future Helping to Change The Lives of Rural Guatemala?



Seeds for a Future provides a comprehensive training Program that empowers families to produce their own food, reduce chronic illnesses, and increase their incomes.

Instead of providing short-term aid (which can be vital in times of crisis), the Seeds Program trains families and communities to become more self-reliant and self-sufficient, breaking longstanding cycles of hardship that rural communities in Guatemala have faced for generations.

- The Seeds Program provides participants with twelve months of weekly in-home training, as well as critical start-up resources.
- Training over time fosters knowledge sharing and builds confidence in the personal actions required to break out of generational poverty and transform lives.
- Families and communities are strengthened by the shared goal of improving health, well-being, and income opportunities.
- Improved health and opportunities create a sense of self-reliance at both the personal and community level, resulting in sustainable, self-sufficient practices and knowledge for building healthier and more vitalized generations to come.



How Does Seeds for a Future's Program Work?



The Seeds Program incorporates one-on-one training and support in three core action areas:

- Nutrition and health education
- Permaculture gardens and small animal husbandry
- Micro-business creation and crop diversification for increased incomes

In addition to providing training and support to participants for creating their own permaculture gardens, Seeds for Future supplies start-up resources such as seedlings, fertilizer, starter protein animals, and pen enclosure materials.

To begin, participating families apply to the Program. The Seeds field team members then meet with each family at their home to jointly assess the family's needs and capacity.

Working together, team members and the family develop a customized usage plan for each participating family's gardens and enclosures to produce as much nutritious food as possible with their available space.

Team members will work with families for a year or more to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed for healthier diets and to sustain their home-based, permaculture gardens.

What are the Impacts of Seeds for a Future's Program?



Program Participants Achieve:

- Sustainable food security
- Improved health and well-being
- New income opportunities
- Upliftment for women and families
- Greater self-reliance and self-sufficiency

Seeds for a Future History of Impact:

- The Program has been implemented in 21 communities located in 8 states across Guatemala.
- Nearly 6,000 Families have graduated from the Program
- 36,000+ people have benefited (average family size = 6 people)
- Thousands of home gardens created and maintained
- Thousands of protein animals raised
- Thousands of native fruit, cacao, and timber trees planted and producing



Why is Seeds for a Future's Program Successful on a Community Level?



The Seeds for a Future Program is designed for flexible implementation.

It can be adapted to virtually any local conditions worldwide, using the following principles of engagement:

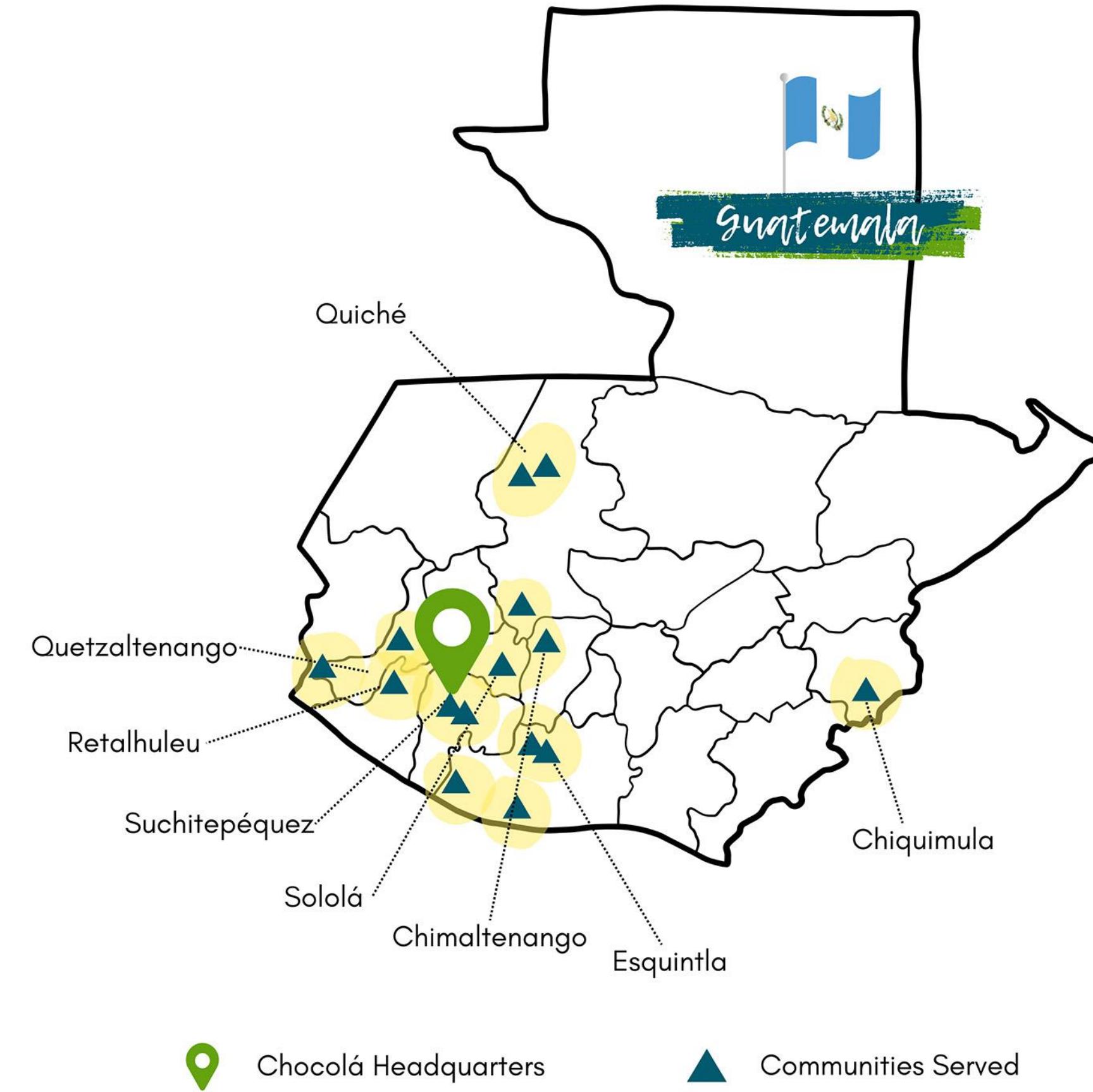
- Sensitivity to the cultural context
- Relevance to participants' needs and interests
- Ethnic, political, and religious neutrality
- Use of learning techniques such as learn-by-doing and guided observation
- Affordable design and the reinforcing effect of early success
- Adaptation to climatic and environmental conditions

Other critical factors for success include:

- Field teams are local to the area and trained to model mutual respect
- Encouraging innovation and learning from failure as well as success
- Self-selection by families indicates a willingness to learn and do their part
- Encouraging the sharing of both knowledge and resources



Program Locations of Seeds for a Future in Guatemala



A Clinical Study of Seeds for a Future's Program



An independent randomized control trial of the Seeds for a Future Program was conducted from 2014 to 2017 by the internationally respected **Institute for Nutrition in Central America and Panama (INCAP)**.

Funded by the Nestlé Foundation of Switzerland, INCAP's research revealed that Seeds for a Future's strategies and methods produce measurable positive improvements in the health of participating mothers and babies.

The Seeds for a Future Program reduced childhood anemia rates from 47% to less than 5% in participating families, a decrease of over 90%. Anemia is a prime cause of diseases such as the chronic stunting affecting almost half of rural Guatemalan children.

The INCAP Study concluded, *“This is the first time that an integrated health, nutrition, and agriculture project demonstrated a positive outcome in biochemical biomarkers in women and children.”*



What Can I Do to Join the Support for Seeds for a Future?



Follow and Share Our Impact

Promote Seeds for a Future via social media, podcasts, or online content.

Links and resources can be found [here](#) or by clicking the icons below:



Partner with Seeds for a Future

We partner with foundations, organizations, or individuals who share our commitment to helping families improve their nutrition, health, and income and to live better lives.

Financial Support

Contribute to Seeds for a Future by linking [here](#) or discover additional ways to contribute, such as Donor-Advised Funds, by linking [here](#).

Volunteer

Seeds for a Future is a growing and dynamic organization with dedicated staff and volunteers contributing their talents to create new potentials and possibilities for reducing disease and increasing opportunities.

For volunteer opportunities, connect with us [here](#).