



# WINGS 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**IT ALL BEGINS WITH REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

# LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

2023 was a year of reflection, gratitude, and positioning ourselves with anticipation for the final stages of our WINGS 2025 strategic plan. We found moments throughout the year to pause and consider all that we have achieved, overcome, and learned since this strategic plan was launched in 2019. You all showed us, over and over again, the power and energy of the community that surrounds WINGS, which only makes us more confident as we look to the future. And we continued to methodically put in place the structures, processes, and community relationships necessary to take the next steps in our ambitious plan to achieve national coverage in 2025.

In 2023, we successfully launched services in three new departments: El Progreso, Jutiapa and Jalapa. This represents our first reaches into the Eastern region of the country, a region culturally and contextually very different from the rest of Guatemala. Often referred to as the dry corridor, these departments are marked by food insecurity and extreme poverty. The successful initiation of services in the East was made possible thanks to a year of field research conducted by our Monitoring and Evaluation team, helping to establish community contacts, detect local needs, and identify possible security concerns. We look forward to completing our services in the East by adding two more departments to our coverage region in 2024.

We are proud to highlight that in 2023, for the first time, WINGS created a position on our team dedicated specifically to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This role is dedicated to making sure that as an employer, our organization is as inclusive as possible and that as a care provider, our services are accessible to the diverse populations that need us across Guatemala.

The last quarter of 2023 was marked by political turmoil and civil unrest across Guatemala. We watched nervously as it seemed like the fate of democracy here hung in the balance. The resulting national strikes highly impacted our ability to provide services in the final months of the year, but we were simultaneously inspired to see Guatemalans from all walks of life come together to demand a strong, functioning democracy and a brighter future for the entire country. We are proud to add our piece to the puzzle of that hopeful tomorrow by enabling thousands of Guatemalans to exercise their reproductive rights.

**Thank you for showing us the strength of community throughout 2023.**

Eleanor Unsworth  
Executive Director

Anne Kraemer  
President, Board of Directors

# ABOUT US

Founded in 2001, WINGS provides quality reproductive health education and services to underserved, primarily rural Guatemalan youth, women, and men. We take a holistic approach to reproductive health that recognizes the diverse barriers to exercising rights at the local level and engages community members, including indigenous women and girls, to secure reproductive rights and bring their voices to the forefront of the decision-making process. Working in predominantly rural, indigenous, and low-income communities in Guatemala, we provide education and services through a network of Youth Leaders, Volunteer Health Promoters, Mobile Units, and Stationary Clinics.



## OUR MISSION

WINGS provides quality reproductive health education and services to underserved, primarily rural Guatemalan youth, women, and men.



## OUR VISION

WINGS envisions a future where all Guatemalans thrive and are able to fully exercise their sexual and reproductive rights.

# OUR IMPACT



**32,618**

Unintended pregnancies prevented\*

**161**

Child deaths prevented\*

**6**

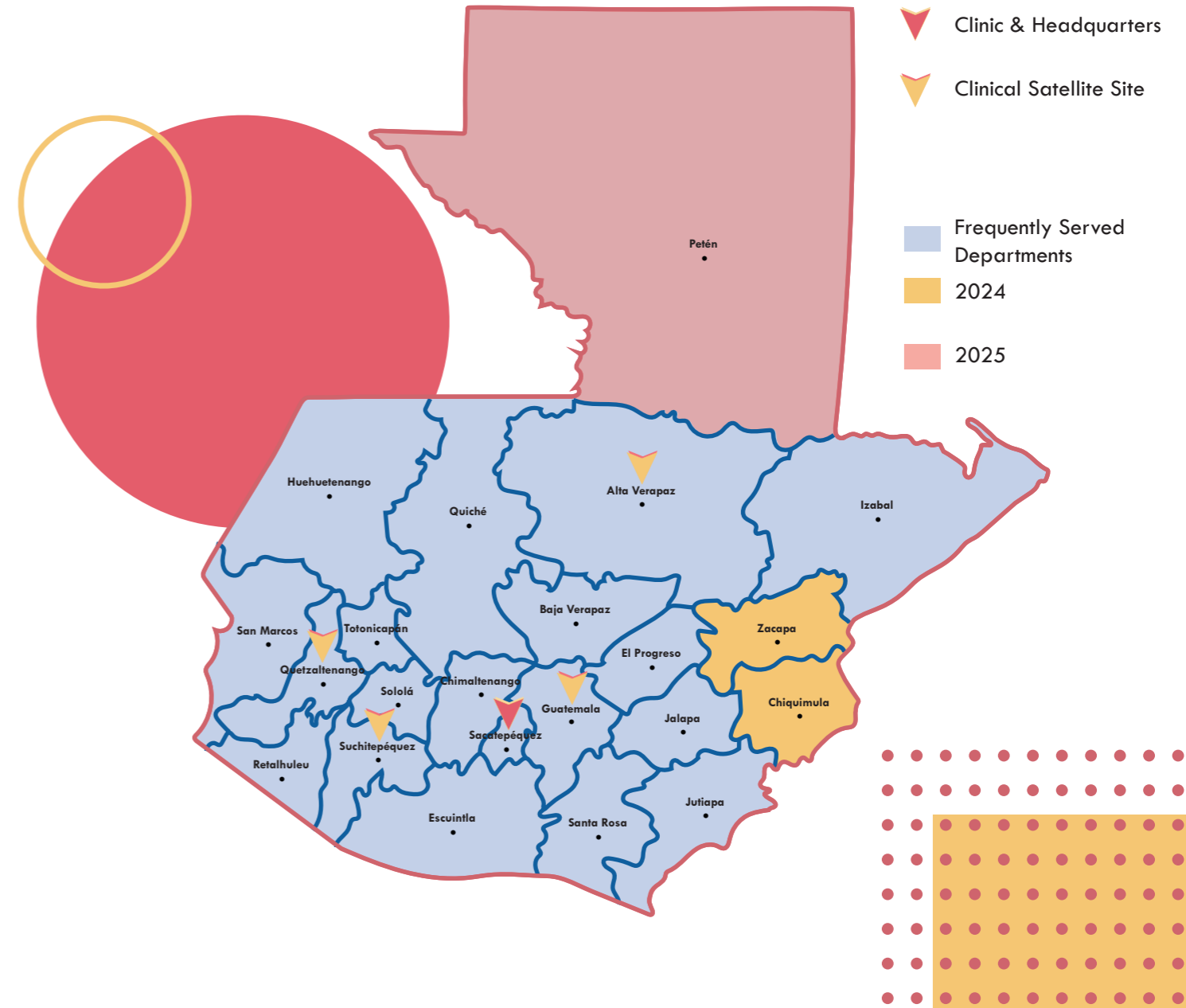
Maternal deaths prevented\*

**26,887**

Individuals reached

\*Calculated using the Marie Stopes International "Impact 2" demographic mathematical model.

# OUR 2023 COVERAGE



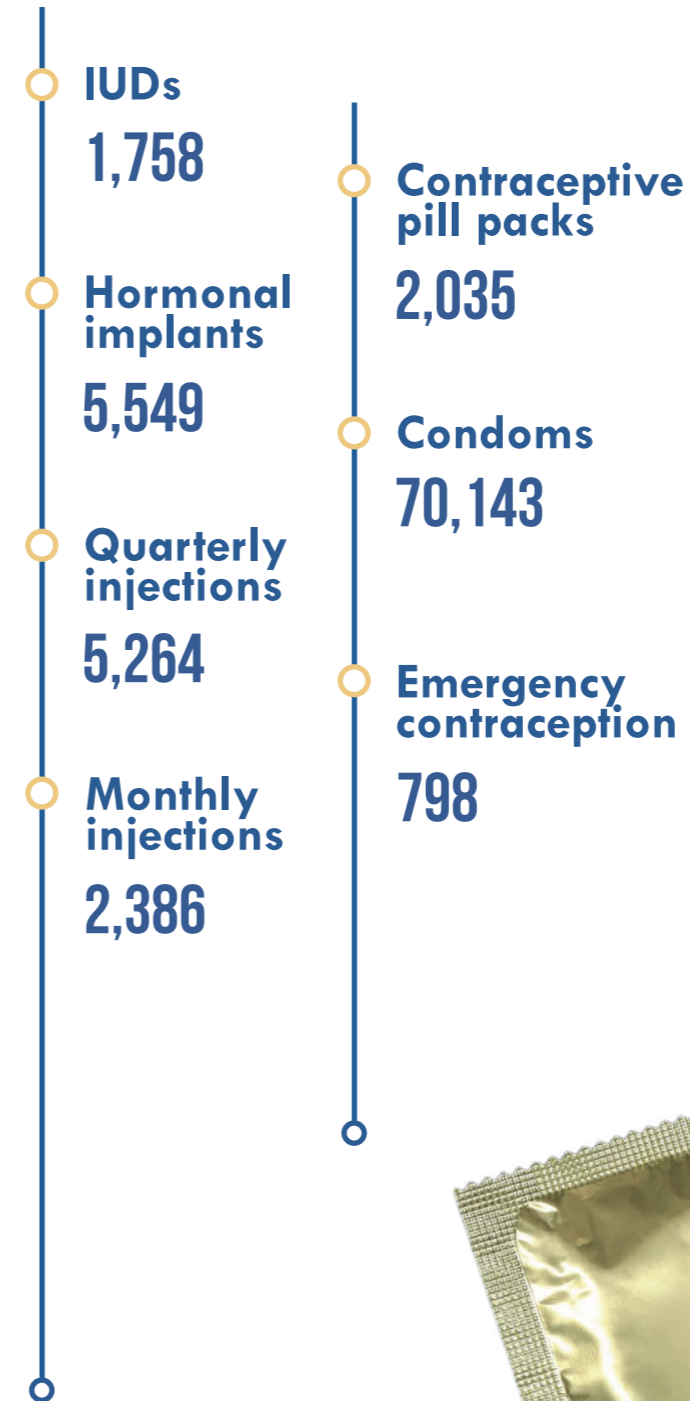
# SERVICE PROVISION

16,793  
PATIENTS  
ATTENDED

3,326  
Cervical cancer screenings

2,602  
Tubal ligations

688  
Vasectomies



# POLITICAL UNREST

Guatemala has suffered from widespread government corruption for generations. In 2023 following an unexpected win from a presidential candidate outside of the corrupt ruling parties, there was a series of attempts to interfere with the election outcome. On October 2nd, the indigenous organization, 48 Cantones, declared a nation-wide strike demanding the resignation of the attorney general and other public officials at the center of the efforts to interfere with the democratic process and peaceful transfer of power to the president elect, Bernardo Arévalo. This strike ultimately lasted over 100 days: a time in which Guatemala experienced intense social and political unrest, profoundly impacting organizations like WINGS.

As the strikes gained momentum, tens of thousands of citizens participated across the country, leading to roadblocks on every major roadway across the country and disruptions in essential services like electricity, gasoline, and groceries. WINGS canceled 103 mobile clinics due to infrastructure blockages and safety concerns, and our offices were temporarily closed. As the situation intensified, violent elements infiltrated the peaceful protests, forcing businesses to close under threat; our clinic in Guatemala City was closed under such threats. This all greatly affected our ability to provide services at normal rates in the last quarter of 2023.

Amid this uncertainty, WINGS did our best to respectfully and responsibly take care of our team and our patients. We provided financial support to staff affected by food shortages and we reactivated avenues for virtual counseling for our patients, as we had done during the pandemic. WINGS cautiously resumed near-normal activities by the end of 2023.

Along with the rest of Guatemala, we were pleased when the peaceful transfer of power occurred in January 2024, though the inauguration itself still experienced multiple threats and delays. After his swearing in after midnight, Bernardo Arévalo stated, "There cannot be democracy without social justice and social justice cannot prevail without democracy." Here at WINGS we breathed a sigh of relief - not for the success of any one political party, but for the success of the democratic process. We know that the future of the social justice work we are doing here at WINGS, our ability to help marginalized Guatemalans exercise their reproductive rights, is so much brighter in the context of a strong democratic system. As we reflect on the challenges of 2023, nationally and institutionally, we stand hopeful looking forward to a 2024 filled with opportunities.



# QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

As WINGS advances on the path to national coverage, we are keenly aware of the importance of continued quality improvement within the context of this ambitious scaling up. We frequently hear from patients that they seek us out because of our reputation for providing quality care and we endeavor to build on this success.

In 2023, our Medical Director, Michelle Dubón, established a Quality Assurance Committee with participation from other leaders on our Service Provision team. This group has been meeting twice a month to evaluate findings from field supervisions, patient feedback surveys, modifications to technical protocols, logistical challenges, staff training needs, and follow-up on patient complications, as they arise.

One primary focus in 2023 was increasing accessibility of our services for adolescent patients. Through staff training on adolescent counseling and improved promotions strategies targeting teens, we increased the total number of adolescents receiving contraception through WINGS by 15.5% from 2022 to a total of 2,076 adolescent patients in 2023.



# WINGS 2025 GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

“I do want to avoid pregnancy, but my husband doesn’t allow me,” Lorena said almost in a whisper. Aura, our promoter from the East, listened attentively. The hospital buzzed with activity—doctors, nurses, and patients hurried through the corridors.

Aura had just finished giving a talk on family planning. When it ended, Lorena, the woman she was now conversing with, approached her. “Do you know where the bathroom is? Could you accompany me?” Lorena asked.

Though Aura found the request strange, her instinct told her to accompany the woman. She

asked the nursing supervisor to come along as well. Lorena’s secrecy was prompted by the fact that her husband was there. They had only come to the hospital that day for her son’s appointment with the pediatrician.

Lorena’s husband, a man with boots, a hat, and a gun on his belt, followed her like a shadow everywhere. She had to resort to excuses and seize any small opportunity to slip away from her husband’s vigilant eye.

Despite already having five children, the discussion Aura was now having with Lorena about family planning was surrounded by the sexist stereotypes her husband devoutly adhered to.

After hearing her situation, Aura suggested that the best course of action might be an IUD. “It’s a discreet and long-lasting method,” Aura said. Lorena nodded—she had already heard about the method and was interested.

It just so happened WINGS would be hosting a *jornada* (clinic day) at a nearby health center in two weeks. The difficulty was in finding a location where her husband wouldn’t follow her.

“I have an idea,” Lorena said. “I sell Tupperware, so I go to pick up orders in the next town over; my husband doesn’t usually accompany me there.”

The nursing supervisor arranged for the hospital ambulance to transport Lorena to and from the *jornada*, ensuring a swift return. Aura instructed the nurses to prioritize Lorena’s consultation. They had a plan. “Your order is ready for pickup tomorrow” Aura texted to Lorena the night before the *jornadas*, following the code they had agreed on. Lorena left very early the next morning, trying not to show her nerves as she told her husband she was off to pick up her products to sell. The ambulance was waiting for her in the center of the town and took her to the *jornada*. The entire situation was meticulously orchestrated to make sure Lorena could access this opportunity for family planning. Like Lorena, countless women face similar barriers imposed by systemic oppression.

Patriarchal structures are highly prevalent in the lives of women in Eastern Guatemala, as demonstrated by the research conducted by our Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning coordinator, Delmi Ramirez. She carried out a six-stage research project involving focus groups in the departments of Jutiapa, Jalapa, and El Progreso.

One of the main findings was that women there lack autonomy in making decisions about their reproductive rights, even compared with other regions in Guatemala. While there is some openness regarding the use of contraceptives, it is ultimately the husband or mother-in-law who makes the final decision.

Additionally, Delmi’s investigation identified that certain municipal authorities express resistance to sexual and reproductive health issues. Their stance is that women should bear children more frequently.

Due to the influence of these leaders, it has been challenging for other organizations to provide services to communities and access to contraceptive methods. While we acknowledge that statistics only tell part of the story, here are some pertinent facts that are helping to guide our work in this region:



### El Progreso

**55% of women and girls in El Progreso have either never been to school or dropped out before finishing primary school.**

### Jalapa

**54% of children under five in Jalapa are chronically malnourished.**

### Jutiapa

**Jutiapa has the highest neonatal mortality rate in the country.**



We know that the reality in Eastern Guatemala is challenging, but access to dignified reproductive health services is essential for improving living conditions. There are hundreds of stories like Lorena’s, courageous individuals willing to face adversity to enjoy their rights. For them, for all those who need us, we will be there.

# CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

Francisca saw the blood on her skirt again, anguish filling her heart. But she decided to endure it silently—the lesson she had been taught her whole life was to be strong, not inconvenience others.

Despite the pain, she continued her work at the tortilleria for several days. Her daughter noticed something wrong and convinced her to go to the health center. The diagnosis was devastating—advanced stage cervical cancer requiring urgent attention.

Accompanied by Gerson, her eldest son, they went to the nearest national hospital in search of help, but there were no beds available. By the time they received a call that a bed was finally available, it was too late; the cancer had spread. Francisca passed away a few months later.

The devastating pain of losing his mother to something that could have been prevented moved Gerson. He set out on a mission to ensure that all women in Guatemala have access to essential healthcare services and cervical cancer screenings. That conviction led him to WINGS.

Now he sits behind the wheel of one of our mobile units every day. He remembers his mother and honors her memory by taking our team of nurses to save women's lives in the remotest places of Guatemala.

The implementation of VIA (visual inspection with acetic acid) screenings has allowed us to save many lives from cervical cancer. Here is a glimpse of our impact in 2023.



Total number of women screened for cervical cancer  
**3,326**

Number of women screened for the first time  
**1,207**

Women whose test was negative  
**3,081**

Women whose test was positive  
**235**

Women whose screening was suspicious of cancer  
**10**

Number of precancerous lesions treated immediately  
**77**





# YOUTH LEADERSHIP

2021

## Adapting to the New Normal

Following the height of the pandemic in 2020, Guatemala was one of the countries slowest to return to in-person learning. Public schools remained closed through all of 2021, affecting approximately 70% of the student population across the country. Despite being unable to provide peer education in schools and as our youth participants faced the impacts of extended isolation at home, we established a safe space at WINGS, offering a supportive environment for teens to navigate this transformative period.



2022

## Embracing Change

Public school students returned to school in a hybrid model, receiving classes only 2 or 3 days a week. Building on the lessons learned throughout 2020 and 2021, we continued to strengthen our ability to address mental health concerns among program participants. Expanding the reach of our peer education program, we launched a group in the Western Highlands region.

2023

## Prioritizing Quality and Consistency

With a renewed focus on standardization and quality, 2023 became a year of strengthening. Virtual learning gave way as the program moved back toward in-person interactions. We saw a notable increase in partner organizations actively seeking collaboration opportunities and increased our capacity to train partners not only on providing Comprehensive Sex Education, but also on reproductive health counseling for adolescents.



2024

## Forging Ahead: Expanding Horizons

Looking ahead, the Youth Leadership Program aims to broaden its reach and impact. Plans are underway to expand the Comprehensive Sexuality Education training program to more departments, breaking down linguistic and cultural barriers along the way.



# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2022	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets	\$ 1,861,829	\$2,273,052
Non-current	\$ 621,469	\$ 177,458
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,483,298</b>	<b>\$ 2,450,510</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current liabilities	\$ 102,233	\$ 57,546
Non-current liabilities*	\$ 224,140	\$ 267,932
Property Mortgage	\$ 218,249	\$ 0
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 544,622</b>	<b>\$ 325,478</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 438,065	\$ 494,296
Without Donor Restrictions**	\$ 1,500,612	\$ 1,630,736
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,938,677</b>	<b>\$ 2,125,032</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$2,483,298</b>	<b>\$2,450,510</b>

\*Guatemala-mandated Severance Reserve. By law, Guatemalan-based institutions must accumulate the equivalent of one month's salary per employee per year of work. Current total reflects 85% of such obligations.

\*\* Including invested endowment funds valued at \$56,881

## FISCAL YEAR: January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

### OPERATING REVENUE



Foundations	\$ 2,004,589
Individuals	\$ 722,991
Others	\$ 81,790

**TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE** \$ 2,809,370

### OPERATING EXPENSES



Programs	\$ 2,202,800
Administration	\$ 307,578
Development	\$ 168,876

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES** \$ 2,679,254

**Net Financial Surplus \$ 130,116**

## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**In the picture:** Eleanor Unsworth, Kate Flatley, Emma López, Lori Heise, Waleska López Canú, Kathy Hall, Anne Kraemer, Joel Weinthal, David Sterman, Dana Rogers, Ángel del Valle, Richard Yankwich, Jackie Verity, Lisa Van Dusen, Joanna Sanchez, Sue Patterson.

# THANK YOU!

To the 537 individuals and foundations around the world who made generous financial contributions to support our work; to the 34 WINGS sustainers that support us monthly; to the 43 new donors who joined our cause; and to the many **advocates, allies, and volunteers** who believe in the power of reproductive rights to transform lives and make the effort to spread the word about WINGS.



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