

## **Asociación Civil de Comadronas Tradicionales de Chimaltenango**

2da Calle 4-02 Zona 4

San Juan Comalapa, Chimaltenango

Guatemala, Centro América

### **Background and Mission**

ACOTCHI, the Association of Traditional Midwives of Chimaltenango, is a group of publicly affiliated traditional midwives from the department of Chimaltenango. It was founded in order to address a number of professional needs common among rural traditional midwives in Guatemala. The association works diligently and efficiently to procure and defend the collective and individual rights of the affiliated midwives. All actions are coordinated at the institutional level.

ACOTCHI was founded on October 12, 2004. The first board of directors was elected in a general assembly held in San Juan Comalapa. Legal status was obtained on Nov 26, 2006.

ACOTCHI is a public nonprofit organization without political or religious affiliation, created out of a need for traditional midwives to have a representative institutional body that works on behalf of their rights and professional development.

This organization seeks to promote the participation of all members through training and common decisions made with the goal of decreasing maternal and child mortality in the department; and improving living conditions for its members through professional training and development programs across several subject areas, including microeconomics, literacy, natural medicines, and artisanal production.

### **Specific Objectives**

Obtain the resources necessary to train members in themes designed to improve the health of inhabitants of the central highlands of Guatemala.

Coordinate with national and international organizations in an attempt to find solutions to the lack of educational and health services in the region.

Work to integrate midwives into regional hospital plans for the management of obstetrical complications.

Provide assistance in the development and commercialization of midwife products and services.

Continue to work to improve institutional access for all its affiliated members.

Facilitate the participation of midwives in political, economic, social, and cultural decision-making in order to promote social equality.

Development protocols to ensure that all affiliate members are properly trained in requisite subject matter.

Provide training in other subject areas to various community groups.

## **Philosophy**

- (1) Respect.** Pay respect to God, the environment, and the beginnings of human life, developing mutuality among all humans, and striving for a culture of peace.
- (2) Harmony.** Strive for peaceful co-existence among all persons and communities.
- (3) Excellence.** Show respect and kindness to all users of our services in an attempt to improve their care.
- (4) Cooperation.** Partner with institutions at local, national, and international levels, collective and individual, in order to strengthen the ability for self-improvement, in a just and democratic manner.
- (5) Solidarity.** Comply with all rights and obligations of and to various institutions and affiliate members.

## **Structure**

- (1) Specific attention.** Provide services to all affiliate members and their families, all patients of the affiliate members, and any of the general public who seek out help.
- (2) Training.** We respect the multiple cultures and ethnicities of our members. Training will value the knowledge and experience of midwives and other important members of the community.
- (3) Vision.** To work within and with the communities in order to generate trust through mutuality, thereby developing opportunities for self-improvement, helping with financial savings and emergency funds.
- (4) Communication.** The affiliate members are the primary avenues of communication with the community. In order to function properly, the help of national and international organizations and donors, sensible to the existent social problems, will be required.
- (5) Specific structure.** A general assembly governed by a Board of Directors. Subcommittees include: training, pharmacy, sale of sundry goods, national and international outreach, health policy work
- (6) Beneficiaries.** The direct beneficiaries number 2,250, all women and children. Indirect beneficiaries number 600, which are the affiliate members and their families.