

1. The main goal of my project was to create a space for midwives—who have been pushed out of the formal healthcare system in El Salvador—to build solidarity by sharing their experiences and wisdom with one another. A secondary goal for this project was to draw the government’s attention to the marginalization of midwives by inviting government officials to listen to the testimonies and demands of midwives from different parts of the country.
2. No other fundraising efforts contributed to this project.
3. The idea for this project emerged from a conversation I had with a group of midwives in El Salvador one year prior to the conference, who informed me that the ministry of health had criminalized their work, and refused to support them. These women, who form the “Asociación de Parteras Rosa Andrade,” expressed that hosting a conference to bring together midwives from across the country could both combat the loss of hope that many midwives feel and be a call for the recognition of midwifery as part of the country’s cultural patrimony.
4. I think that midwives are marginalized in El Salvador because the country’s healthcare system has become increasingly westernized and does not value traditional/indigenous forms of healing. Additionally, the capitalist patriarchy that dominates much of the world does not recognize the labor of women, especially poor women.
5. I chose to work in El Salvador because midwives there are more marginalized than in most other countries, and have even been threatened with being put in jail for practicing—even though most of them have received the certification necessary to do their work legally. Additionally, I was already familiar with the culture and language, and had connections there that made the project possible.
6. Despite what is shown in the mainstream media about the violence that exists in El Salvador, it was an incredibly warm and welcoming place to work. Everyone I met was open to helping and I was able to build community there very easily—especially among the midwives.
7. I never felt like the project was not going to work, however, there were a few moments when I was worried that the funds would not cover everything.
8. The biggest challenge in communicating was finding the midwives in order to invite them. It took a lot of reaching out to people in order to locate as many midwives as we could. Over 100 midwives attended the conference, however, we are certain that this is nowhere near the number of midwives that exist in the country.
9. I would define peace as the ability to live free of any kind of violence, whether it be interpersonal or systematic.
10. This project has brought peace to many women already by making them feel that the work they have dedicated their lives to is not going unrecognized even though the government has refused to support them. Strengthening the midwifery movement in El Salvador has the potential to bring peace to the most vulnerable women in rural parts of the country, who depend on midwives for prenatal care, sexual education, family planning, births free of violence, domestic violence intervention and emotional support.

Midwives have historically been warriors for women's rights in their communities and supporting them means supporting the well-being of thousands Salvadoran women.

11. This project has changed my perspective of the world by teaching me the unsurmountable importance of community. As someone who has grown up in an individualistic culture, it has been an incredibly transformative to witness the strength and beauty of collective action.
12. "This project was valuable because it created an empowering space for Salvadoran midwives, who fight for the country's most vulnerable women and girls, to build solidarity with one another. Throughout my experience, I have learned about the transformative power of community-based action." -Noemí Delgado

A Space for Solidarity: National Conference of Salvadoran Midwives • El Salvador
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