



Annual Impact Report:

Resilience and
Sustainability

2024

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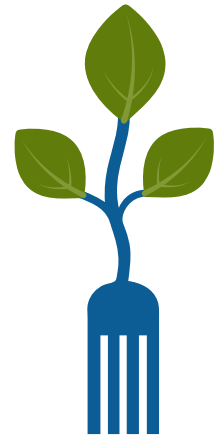
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About Us

The Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition (PHI CWN) is a leader in developing campaigns, programs, and partnerships to promote wellness and equitable health practices in the most vulnerable communities across the world. We have established relationships with local, state, national, and international organizations, and through **education**, **training and technical assistance**, **advocacy**, and **evaluation**, we work to make health accessible for all.



Our Strategic Pillars

Our strategic pillars guide our efforts to promote community wellness and equity. These pillars form the foundation of our services, ensuring purposeful outcomes and fostering healthier, more equitable communities.

EDUCATION

We deliver high-quality health education centered on integrity, creativity, personalized wellness strategies, and respect for health educators. Our initiatives are designed to boost health literacy among diverse populations, ensuring equitable access to trustworthy health information.

ADVOCACY

We focus on promoting health through supportive policies, advancing equity via advocacy and education, and empowering communities to advocate for equitable policies, systems, and environments.

TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We deliver tailored training and technical assistance with a focus on strengthening individual and organizational capacity, using engaging community-centered learning strategies and providing a comprehensive range of professional development and continuing education options.

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

We focus on building evidence and insight through original research and evaluations, guiding community-centered participatory approaches, demonstrating methodological ingenuity, and translating findings into actionable intelligence in service to equity and community.

A Message from PHI CWN Leadership

Dear Partners and Friends,

As I write this message to you, I can't help but be distracted and disturbed by the horrific and undignified actions against people and organizations that we deeply care about in our communities. At the same time, however, I am hopeful and inspired by leaders and residents, young and old in those same communities coming together to strengthen and deliver services, advocate for each other, and provide help, support and assistance where needed. One of my biggest takeaways from the COVID-19 pandemic was that community-based organizations and leaders know how to mobilize, pivot and act immediately in the face of adversity. As a result, community members know who to trust and where to look for the help that they truly need. This is the essence and locus of **resilience and sustainability**.

These observations left a lasting impression on me and guide how we, at the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition (PHI CWN) approach our work with our funders and community partners. We strive to create the conditions for **resilience** and the **sustainability** of what works.

In our 2024 Impact Report, I hope that you will see how we trust and empower our communities by honoring lived experience, developing community leadership, prioritizing and promoting community assets, and add value to local data by supporting participatory evaluation approaches.



These are universal approaches that align with our Health Equity and Racial Justice platform for our domestic and global work.

Organizationally, our leadership team continues to develop more transparent, team-based, efficient internal operations to optimize the work experience and talent of our staff and support their ongoing dedication to the health and wellness of our communities. As we move forward, we are committed to the following:

- **Protecting Essential Resources:** We will continue to advocate for the programs that provide crucial support to people's lives, including food, nutrition, behavioral health, and other vital resources.
- **Strengthening Community Connections:** We will deepen partnerships to support the communities most vulnerable to devastating policies, ensuring they are resilient, empowered, and heard.
- **Upholding Equity and Justice:** Our commitment to social justice remains unwavering, with a focus on dismantling the systems that pose challenges and barriers faced by the most marginalized among us.

Together, we will face the challenges ahead with **resilience**, hope, and the shared belief in a **sustainable** future where every person can live a healthy, dignified life. We invite you to join us in these efforts!

Finally, I want to thank you for your friendship, partnership, and support throughout the year. Please join me in celebrating our successes by viewing our report.

With Gratitude,

Erika Takada
Executive Director,
Public Health Institute's
Center for Wellness and Nutrition



Our Services Expand Across the Globe

PHI CWN works and collaborates across the world on some of the most pressing issues in public health. Our staff leverages their expertise in nutrition education, community engagement, research and evaluation, and program development to promote health equity and reduce health disparities. By amplifying leadership, dismantling structural barriers, and addressing the social detriments of health inequity, PHI CWN is working towards a future where all individuals have access to good health.

Our Impact in Numbers

The following highlights showcase the breadth and impact of PHI CWN's work in 2024—reflecting our commitment to equity, innovation, and community partnership.



Partnered with

155

Community-Based
Organizations to reach
vulnerable populations



Reached

1,626

individuals through
39 training events



Reached

6,463

individuals directly
and 4,235 individuals
indirectly



Reached

1,545

individuals at 12
conferences



Partnered with

15

unique, affinity, and
professional
workgroups

Kenya Ministry of Health: Nutrition Screening Capacity Strengthening Program

To improve childhood and adolescent nutrition screening and monitoring in rural Kenya, the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition (PHI CWN), in partnership with the Siaya County Government Department of Health and Sanitation, launched a nutrition training program. This initiative aims to strengthen the primary healthcare system by improving nutrition and nutrition-related services at both the facility and household levels. The program equips healthcare professionals and community health agents with the knowledge to assess the nutritional needs of children, evaluate their nutritional status using Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) z-score tape, and make referrals to appropriate healthcare facilities.

Healthcare professionals were trained in the use of the new and innovative MUAC z-score tape, enabling them to screen children, interpret results, engage with caregivers in discussions, and follow referral protocols for malnourished children to ensure continued care. In addition, the Siaya County healthcare system was provided with a donation of over **5,000** MUAC z-score tapes by the Abbott Center for Malnutrition Solutions.

Since the program's launch in January 2024, 50 Community Health Promoters have screened over **16,000** children using the MUAC z-score tape and referred more than **146** children to health facilities for malnutrition treatment.



By integrating MUAC z-score data into the Child Health and Nutrition Information System, the program's effectiveness will be assessed to evaluate its impact on improving nutrition risk assessment and treatment. PHI CWN is eager to develop a standardized nutrition training program and expand it to other counties, contingent on the demonstrated success and impact of the program in Siaya County.

"Since implementing our screening, identification, referral, and follow-up processes for children with malnutrition under five years old, we have observed a significant increase in treatment numbers, with our cure rate now exceeding 90%"

– Oscar Kambone,
Siaya County Nutrition and Health
Policy Coordinator

Solidarity Beyond Borders: Connecting for a Better Future



Rooted in the knowledge, strength, and leadership of Indigenous communities, Solidarity Beyond Borders is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded initiative focused on co-creating healthier, more resilient futures for Mixtec and Zapotec families in Oaxaca, Mexico, and California. In partnership with the Mixteco Indigenous Community Organizing Project (MICOP) in Oxnard and Puente a la Salud Comunitaria – Solidaridad Internacional Kanda (Puente-SiKanda) in Oaxaca, PHI CWN is supporting locally led solutions that honor cultural identity, strengthen health and food systems, and foster cross-regional collaboration.

Through participatory, qualitative research with community members in both locations, the project identified three shared priorities: food security, access to health services, and the advancement of women's agency.

These findings illuminated both the urgent needs and the deep resilience within each community.

In response, partners co-designed immersive, multi-day exchanges in Oaxaca and California. These gatherings—grounded in lived experience and community wisdom—offered space to share concerns, highlight local innovations, and learn from one another. Each exchange was rich with generosity, pride, and determination, reinforcing the power of communities to lead meaningful change.

What's Next?

The energy and ideas sparked by these exchanges laid the groundwork for future collaboration. Participants expressed strong interest in continuing to share culturally grounded, climate-conscious practices—like sustainable gardening, traditional recipes, solidarity savings groups, and strategies to improve language-appropriate access to health services.



PHI CWN, Puente-SiKanda, and MICOP remain committed to building on this momentum and deepening their partnership to support the well-being and self-determination of Mixtec and Zapotec communities across borders.

Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services Through National Partnerships to Improve and Protect the Nation's Health

From 2023-2024, PHI CWN supported two cohorts within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Division of Population Health: the *Closing the Gap with Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Plans Grant Program* and the *Addressing Conditions to Improve Population Health – ACTion* initiative. Working with 20 organizations across 16 states and territories, PHI CWN provided training and technical assistance to help grantees embed health equity, community voice, and co-decision-making into their systems-change efforts.

Following a needs assessment, PHI CWN facilitated 11 interactive trainings on topics like leadership, food and nutrition security, community-clinical linkages, and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies. Accelerator recipients also received tailored technical assistance focused on key social

determinants of health, along with tools for data collection, community engagement, and team development.

Post-training evaluations informed continuous improvements, resulting in more engaging sessions and useful resources. Grantees reported increased ability to apply equity-focused approaches and valued the hands-on support.

PHI CWN's partnership with these CDC initiatives concluded in 2024, marking a significant contribution to national efforts to improve public health through community-led and equity-centered strategies. The organization is deeply grateful to the CDC Division of Population Health for the opportunity to serve as a technical assistance provider and to support recipients committed to building healthier, more inclusive systems across the country.

Participant Reflections

"I really enjoyed this training. It was clear, organized, and relevant to systems-level change—while emphasizing the importance of including the community."

– Participant from Trainings



"We are so grateful for your service and support in this process."

– Participant from Trainings

Achieving Resilient Communities



From June to July 2024, PHI CWN conducted an independent evaluation of the Achieving Resilient Communities (ARC) project, a five-year initiative designed to strengthen community resilience in regions across California. Led by PHI programs—Tracking California, Roots of Change, and the Public Health Alliance of Southern California—the ARC project emphasized strategic partnerships with community-based organizations to promote long-term systems change.

To assess the project's impact, PHI CWN conducted key informant interviews with ARC staff and partners. The findings were analyzed using thematic content analysis guided by the "One Community at a Time" framework for community resilience (Ma, Qirui & Lv, 2023). These results, along with tailored recommendations, were shared with the ARC leadership team for further reflection and planning.

Despite facing challenges throughout its implementation, ARC achieved meaningful

progress in supporting community-led resilience efforts.

The initiative fostered strong collaborations with local organizations and residents through structured feedback loops. In Ventura County, it supported the formation of a farmworker committee that helped shape project goals and guided advocacy efforts. Notably, ARC partners worked with regional coalitions to integrate indigenous language audio alerts—Mixtec and Zapotec—into wildfire emergency systems, expanding communication access for vulnerable communities.

The project also played a key role in advocating for safer working conditions for farmworkers, addressing issues such as access to cool drinking water, protections for workers in hoop houses, and better mechanisms for reporting workplace violations.

What's Next?

In addition, ARC produced a powerful video series on the impacts of extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and flooding on farmworker communities. This series has become a vital advocacy tool to elevate farmworker rights and climate resilience.



Overall, ARC made notable strides in advancing resilience through policy, advocacy, and deep community engagement. The results of the evaluation will inform future strategies and help secure funding to continue building equitable and resilient communities across California.

Racial Equity Workforce Assessment in SNAP-Ed: Insights and Next Steps

In Federal Fiscal Year 2024, a SNAP-Ed workforce assessment focused on racial equity was conducted across implementing agencies in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Grounded in the Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA) *Guiding Principles to Embed Equity in SNAP-Ed*, the goal of the assessment was to better understand current strengths and identify opportunities to deepen the integration of social justice and equity within SNAP-Ed efforts.

The assessment examined each of the six Guiding Principles:

- Centering People
- Authentic Community Engagement
- Starting with Strengths
- Impact Over Intent
- Integrity, Transparency and Accountability
- Cross-Sector Partnerships

Results revealed that SNAP-Ed implementers across the three states know, respect, and trust their communities and partners, and are strongly focused on achieving meaningful program outcomes. However, to more fully align with ASNNA's Guiding Principles, the findings pointed to the need for increased investment in compensating and authentically engaging community members, allocating funding toward strengths-based approaches, and implementing policies that ensure all staff receive regular training and ongoing professional development in equity, racial justice, and power dynamics.



PHI CWN will present the results of this project alongside state representatives from Georgia, North Carolina, and/or South Carolina at the upcoming ASNNA Conference in February 2025 in Las Vegas, NV. All three states have expressed a strong commitment to strengthening their ability to embed the Guiding Principles into SNAP-Ed. North Carolina, in particular, plans to roll out a statewide training in FFY 2025 focused on integrating equity and social justice into SNAP-Ed practices. This training will be available to all staff across implementing agencies, including administrators, evaluators, nutrition educators, and other key personnel.

For a comprehensive overview, refer to the full health and racial equity workforce assessment in the Final Report, or [click here](#).

Resilience and Sustainability

Farmers Market Initiative

Training and Technical Assistance

Since 2018, the Farmers Market Initiative (FMI), locally known as Get More at the Farmers Market, has helped low-income Californians access more California-grown produce while supporting local farmers. What began as a California State Nutrition Action Council initiative is now a signature initiative of the California Department of Social Services CalFresh Healthy Living program.

PHI's Center for Wellness and Nutrition helped establish FMI as a sustainable, statewide effort by building local agency capacity and providing training, technical assistance, and resources. Agencies now lead their own FMI activities, track progress in PEARS, and use customizable, multilingual materials including a reporting job aid and the Biweekly Harvest Newsletter.

[Learn More](#)

Healthy Food Rx Studies

Research & Evaluation

The Food is Medicine project provides home-delivered, nutritious meal kits to individuals with diabetes in Stockton, California. Participants receive these kits biweekly for six months to support healthier eating and daily habits. PHI CWN has partnered with multiple organizations over the past four years to implement and evaluate different program models, including clinic- and community-based referrals and health coaching led by community health workers (CHWs). Six studies involving approximately 1,500 participants show significant improvements in health outcomes, with CHW-led coaching yielding the best results. This demonstrates that home-delivered meals, combined with health coaching, can effectively support individuals with diabetes, especially those facing food insecurity.

[Learn More](#)

Building Healthy Habits Initiative

Education

The Building Healthy Habits Initiative (BHHI) promotes healthier environments for California preschoolers through policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes. In FFY 2024, PHI CWN piloted the CalFresh Healthy Living BHHI Toolkit with five early childhood education sites—Carquinez Garden School, Castellanos Family Daycare, Divine Decisions Outreach Ministries, Un Mundo de Amigos, and YMCA of the East Bay.

Together, they implemented 24 PSE changes across 10 sites, including edible gardens, family seedling kits, food pantries, and fun physical activities like yoga. With 13 active partnerships, the initiative reached over **1,200** children and families, helping to build healthy habits that last.

[Learn More](#)

California Nutrition Incentive Program

Advocacy

PHI CWN's affiliated program, Roots of Change, in collaboration with over 100 community-based organizations statewide, reversed the Governor's decision to cut **\$32 million** in funding for the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) from this year's California budget. This win highlights their commitment to expanding access to fresh, local produce for low-income communities through programs like Market Match—California's largest nutrition incentive program. Moving forward, Roots of Change and its coalition partners will advocate for a permanent CNIP allocation within the ongoing budget of the Farm to Fork Office at the California Department of Food and Agriculture, ensuring the program's long-term sustainability.

[Learn More](#)

Resilience and Sustainability

Food is Medicine Research & Evaluation

From November 2022 to April 2024, PHI CWN and four community partners conducted **1,157** social needs screenings as part of the "Food is Medicine" program in Stockton, CA, focused on supporting low-income individuals with diabetes. The screenings identified key barriers related to social determinants of health and led to **1,377** referrals for support services. Through the Future Well Communities network, participants were connected to resources such as the Healthy Food Rx program, nutrition and diabetes education, support groups, health coaching, pharmacist consultations, free glucose testing supplies, and transportation assistance. Food insecurity emerged as the most common issue, reported by 73% of participants. Partners remain dedicated to improving diabetes care for Stockton's most vulnerable residents.

[Learn More](#)

Los Angeles Grocery Voucher Program Training & Technical Assistance

In partnership with Roots of Change, LA County Public Health, and seven community-based organizations, PHI CWN enrolled over **4,300** low-income households in the 2024 Los Angeles Grocery Voucher Program, offering \$600–\$900 in food benefits. Building on the 2023 program that reached over **15,000 participants**, the 2024 effort focused on young adults (18–24) and undocumented immigrants, distributing more than **\$3.2 million** in benefits between September and November. Participants could shop in-store at Albertsons or Northgate Gonzalez Markets. About 88% completed pre-surveys, and post-survey data collection through February 2025 will inform a final White Paper on best practices and program impact.

[Learn More](#)

CalFresh Healthy Living Annual Impact Report Research & Evaluation

PHI CWN has supported the California Department of Social Services in producing the CalFresh Healthy Living annual report for several years. In FFY 2024, SNAP-Ed reporting shifted to the National Program Evaluation and Reporting System, prompting a reevaluation of the report's purpose and audience. PHI CWN, in collaboration with Statewide Training and the CalFresh Healthy Living evaluation work group, proposed updates to better highlight equity and community voice. While only minor changes were possible this year due to existing data, the report will include more success stories and disaggregated data by age and race/ethnicity. The workgroup is also exploring participatory approaches for future reporting, including training and pilot testing.

[Learn More](#)

California State Nutrition Action Council Training & Technical Assistance

In FFY 2024, PHI CWN, in coordination with Brown Miller Communications and on behalf of the California Department of Social Services, continued its long-standing support of California's State Nutrition Action Council (SNAC). This year marked a significant milestone with the establishment of a new governance structure, developed with input from SNAC members. The Council ratified a comprehensive Governance Proposal that reflects a shared commitment to more effective, equitable, and sustainable coordination of statewide nutrition and obesity prevention efforts. A key outcome of this process was the creation of six new standing committees, each designed to improve alignment with the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework and support SNAC's long-term strategic goals.

[Learn More](#)

Resilience and Sustainability

Rwanda Health Clinic Nutrition Pilot Study

Training and Technical Assistance

In partnership with the Abbott Center for Malnutrition Solutions and the Society for Family Health, PHI CWN launched a pilot program to implement a national nutrition screening initiative in Rwanda. This effort aligns with the Rwandan Government's National Strategy for Transformation II, which aims to reduce malnutrition and child stunting rates from 33% to 15% by 2029. PHI CWN trained 35 healthcare professionals across six districts on using the MUAC-z score tape, a more accurate screening tool than the conventional MUAC tape. This training empowers healthcare workers to integrate nutrition screening into routine care. Success stories and lessons were shared at the 2025 World Health Summit, and ongoing data collection is informing plans for expanding the program to other districts in Rwanda.

[Learn More](#)

Community-Informed SNAP-Ed Evaluation for Positive Change

Research & Evaluation

PHI CWN has partnered with North Carolina SNAP-Ed for several years to conduct annual statewide evaluations and provide technical assistance to the state's nine implementing agencies (IAs) on federal reporting. Currently, Implementing Agencies use different data tools, making state-level data integration challenging. Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, pre- and post-surveys assess behavior change in line with federal requirements. In 2024, PHI CWN began collaborating with the evaluation work group to develop common questions for SNAP-Ed priority indicators. This consent-based process ensures all voices are heard, with finalized adult questions and ongoing review for children's questions. These common questions will improve outcome measures and better detect incremental changes. The process will continue into 2025, with tools ready for the 2026 data collection cycle.

[Learn More](#)

Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative

Education

In early 2024, PHI CWN, in collaboration with the California Department of Public Health, Office of Health Equity, launched the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative's Local-Level Public Education and Change Campaigns. This 2.5-year, \$30 million project includes 28 community and tribal organizations working with diverse youth from communities, aiming to reimagine systems supporting behavioral health and wellness for California's children, youth, and their families. The initiative is youth-led, focusing on reducing stigma, raising awareness, and encouraging help-seeking behaviors. Youth advisory boards and other activities are driving these efforts, engaging peers ages 0-25 statewide. PHI CWN oversees the project, offering technical assistance, evaluation support, and cross-learning. After focusing on youth recruitment in the first year, 28 tailored, youth-led campaigns will launch.

[Learn More](#)

CalFresh Healthy Living Tribal Ambassador Committee

Advocacy

The CalFresh Healthy Living Tribal Ambassador Committee has focused on ensuring California Indigenous community perspectives are included in nutrition education. Since its inception, the committee has identified five newly funded Tribal Organizations to deliver culturally tailored nutrition services across the state. The committee also plays an advisory role, guiding the development and implementation of programs that reflect the unique needs and traditions of Indigenous communities. Moving forward, the committee will host a Statewide Partnership Symposium to foster collaboration and share insights with agencies involved in nutrition education and policy for American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

[Learn More](#)



Contact Us

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and organizations whose support has been instrumental in achieving the impact detailed in this report. Without the unwavering dedication of our partners, funders, and community members, our goals would remain out of reach. Additionally, we express appreciation to our valued customers who participate in PHI CWN programming, trusting us with their stories and community needs. Their feedback and testimonials have played a pivotal role in refining our approaches and deepening our understanding of the impact of our programs and services.



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