



GROWING HOPE

G L O B A L L Y

Annual Report 2020-2021





“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

— 1 Peter 4:10



Letter from the President

A little boy offered his lunch. A bunch of friends volunteered their time. A son asked for his father’s blessing. And thousands were not just fed, but satisfied.

Each of us has something to contribute in our mission to overcome hunger, a gift to bring to this effort to build God’s Kingdom on earth, as it will be in heaven. Thank you for using your gifts! Together we have served more than 2.1 million people, encouraging them to utilize their gifts too.

In 1999 Ron DeWeerd felt called to practice his God-given gift of calling others into action to help launch Growing Hope Globally. “I knew that this is what God made me to do - to motivate others and get Growing Hope Globally off the ground.” As Ron prepares to retire in Fall 2021, we give thanks that he answered that call and has encouraged countless others to join us over the past twenty-two years. Please join me in saying “well done, good and faithful servant.”

This past year was an unprecedented challenge because of the global pandemic. Although things are slowly returning to “normal” in the US, our partners overseas will continue to face obstacles for a while, and the economic impact of COVID means that global hunger is on the rise.

But because you have used your gifts to serve others, we were able to fund all of our overseas programs and start four new ones last year. While we were not able to travel or host overseas guests, we were able to stay connected thanks to technology. We have expanded our resources to reach the next generation, especially agriculture teachers and FFA students.

I hope you will enjoy reading the stories in this report and learning about the many ways people are using their gifts and talents to serve their neighbors, both local and global, in partnership with Growing Hope Globally. Learn how a church in Perkasio, Pennsylvania is using land that they have owned for 275 years in new ways; How FFA students in Ackley, Iowa mobilized their school and their community to make a global difference; How a long-time Growing Project in Byron Center, Michigan has been revitalized by getting dairy farmers involved; How Jawanda in Zimbabwe has embraced his gifts as a cook; How Private Service Providers in India are helping their community to farm in more efficient ways; And how indigenous people in Paraguay are reinventing their lifestyle and adapting to a new way of handling a skill that was passed down by their ancestors: harvesting honey.

Despite the many challenges of this season, I am full of joy because each of you follows Peter’s admonition to use your gifts to serve others and thereby share God’s grace. Thank you!

Blessings,

Max Finberg

Max Finberg





Small Town, Global Impact

Ackley IA Growing Project

FFA Advisor James Abbas teaches at AGWSR High School in Ackley, Iowa. Abbas was looking for a way to help his students see beyond their community and consider issues like global hunger that affect the rest of the world. “I wanted to raise awareness of the issues that exist outside of our classroom, connecting the students to the real world and helping them understand how fortunate we are here in the United States.”

So, in early spring of 2020, Abbas’ agriculture class participated in Growing Hope’s Global Farmer Experience. The students were inspired and immediately decided to find a way to make a difference. Lance Haupt, a local farmer, had joined them that day and he gathered with a group of FFA students after class. When the students expressed their interest in starting a Growing Project, he pledged 12 acres of soybeans to get the project started.

“Partnering with AGWSR is a great way for me to support what Mr. Abbas is doing in his classroom. James provides a good example of what hard work and Godly character look like on a daily basis. This project is important to me because it helps to provide food and resources to areas of the world that are in need and it is a way for me to share some of the blessings that God has given me.”

Rachel Haupt, Lance’s daughter, was one of the project leaders. She used her gifts to develop a brochure to share the project with the local community. Other students used their talents for outreach, and soon the project was underway. The group knew from the beginning that they wanted to make this more than just a one-time thing. “Our goal is to make this an annual project benefitting both the FFA chapter and Growing Hope Globally.”

While COVID made it difficult to hold any events for the wider community, the students were undeterred, and several local agribusinesses joined them. Stine Seed Company donated the soybean seed and worked with the students to run a test plot. Snittjer Grain donated the other inputs.

The first year was a success! The agriculture class declared April 21 as the school’s World Hunger Day. They held an all-school assembly so their fellow students could learn more about the project. They showed videos about Growing Hope Globally and the Honduras Macuelizo program, which they had chosen to support with their crop proceeds. Two FFA officers spoke about hunger and their project. Then the chapter proudly presented a supersized check to Growing Hope staff member Ron De Weerd, representing their \$8,341.38 donation. “This organization gives a whole new meaning to ‘raising’ money,” quipped FFA student Lane Abbas.

They were pleased at the way their town worked together to make a difference. “As a community, people donated and came together to support a common goal,” commented Kennedy Dodd. “Everyone knows that hunger is a serious problem, but I never thought we could help so many people around the world from our small town,” added Jenna Shahan.

For Lance Haupt, the difference that the Growing Project will make around the world was only part of the impact. “I hope both the FFA and the school were able to see individuals and businesses volunteer time and money to benefit something other than themselves. Hopefully this will instill a desire for them to continue to serve others in whatever way they can throughout their lives.”



A Growing Project Revitalized

Byron Center MI Growing Project

Friendship Christian Reformed Church has been involved with the Byron Center, Michigan Growing Project since 2003. It began when a landowner offered the use of his field and a local farmer committed to grow a crop. The project grew from there, with many people contributing their gifts and talents. “We always encouraged people to use their creativity,” said former Growing Hope Globally staff member and current Growing Project leader Bev Abma.

One man hosted chicken harvests, growing broilers and inviting people to pay \$15 for the experience of butchering their own chicken. A young girl raised a goat for the project. A farmer raised heritage turkeys and provided honey. One family raised steers and another regularly supplied exotic green eggs. Corn, soybeans and hay were grown on land contributed by farms, a school and the church. One person even climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro to raise funds.

The Growing Project committee did a great job of keeping the project in front of the congregation. They hosted Growing Hope overseas guests and held dinners with outdoor learning events. They even provided children with tomato seedlings, all to encourage learning and prayer for the Growing Hope family around the world.

Unfortunately, over time some of the creativity and enthusiasm ebbed and the leadership team got discouraged. The church still supported Growing Hope through regular offerings and budget giving, but fewer people were actively engaged.

In early 2020, Bev Abma began praying about how to bring the Growing Project back to life. With several dairy farmers attending Friendship CRC, she began to explore the idea of a dairy model.



Pastor Dan Kinnas often offered a \$10 challenge during worship services, inviting a volunteer to use it and report back on how it had blessed the community. One Sunday he offered \$100 instead. In the silence that followed, Bev realized this was the opportunity she’d been waiting for. She decided to use that \$100 to sponsor a cow.

Things grew from there. Three dairies committed two cows each for the project and the church members were invited to sponsor them. “It is a privilege to have our families be part of dairy farming and use our gifts to further Growing Hope,” said second generation dairy farmer David Masselink.

The church kicked things off in January, generating interest through monthly videos featuring Growing Hope board member LaRaine Salmon in costume as “Daisy at the Dairy.” Farmer Joni Masselink says “It is a real privilege to be able to bring what we know and what we are passionate about to the world.”

Enthusiasm has been rekindled, and people of all ages are again coming up with creative ways to support Growing Hope, including local 4-H and FFA groups. “It builds community and unity in the church to work for a cause and a purpose that is greater than ourselves,” said Youth Pastor Eric Everhart.

A celebration in August featured learning opportunities at Nutrien Ag Solutions and Walnutdale Farms. “There are a lot of farmers in the church and they get excited being a part of something that is in their field of expertise,” said Pastor Tim Holwerda, “I like that we are not sending beef or milk, but providing training.”



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— Youth Pastor Eric Everhart





Using Gifts in New Ways

Perkasie PA Growing Project

In 2018, the members of Deep Run East Mennonite Church in Perkasie, Pennsylvania were challenged to come up with new and innovative ways to use the gifts God had given them. As church member Kermit Yoder considered the possibilities, he recalled an article he had clipped from the Mennonite Weekly Review more than 15 years earlier. It was about farmers in Minnesota donating the proceeds from their crops through Growing Hope Globally.

Deep Run East is blessed with 40 acres of tillable land, so Yoder suggested that the church use it for a Growing Project. It would be a great way to use both individual gifts in the congregation, as well as their corporate gift: the land. The rest of the congregation agreed, and a team including Phil Nyce, Henry Rice, Mark Schmidt and Kermit Yoder stepped forward to help lead the project. They decided to grow soybeans, and named their project “Crops for Hunger.”

In addition to committing the land, Deep Run East members made financial contributions and even allocated some existing church funds toward the project. “Working with Growing Hope Globally is a good fit for our congregation,” said leadership team member Henry Rice, “Our project uses our resources to serve a global need while including those who are not easily able to travel.”

The church and community got involved in various ways, with each one using their own gifts and resources. Pioneer dealer Jacob Crooke donated the seed, and on May 27, 2020, the first soybean crop was planted. Farmers Mark Schmidt, Wes Schmidt and Nate Wilson took care of the crop from start to finish. God provided a wonderful growing season with timely rain and warm temperatures, and the crop exceeded expectations. At harvest time, church member Dale



“Working with Growing Hope Globally is a good fit for our congregation. Our project uses our resources to serve a global need while including those who are not easily able to travel.”

—Henry Rice



Overholt and his employer PV Transport hauled the crop to market. It was purchased by Weaver’s Toasted Grains for a generous price.

Meanwhile, church member Joe Dise and his uncle Dean Overholt approached the team, wanting to help. Their idea was to plant extra sweet corn to sell or give to local people in need. The group set up a roadside stand where those in need could get the corn for free and those who wished could make a donation to their Growing Project.

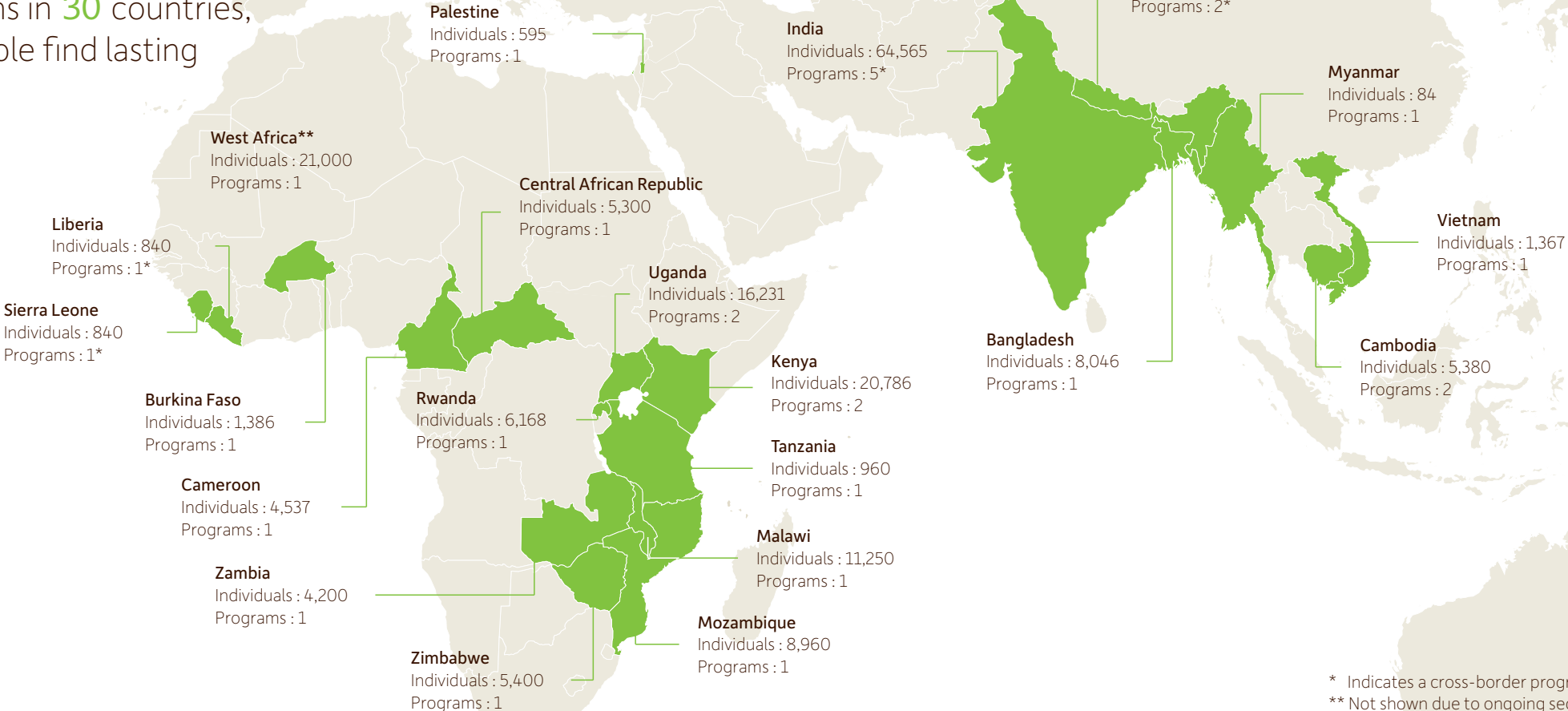
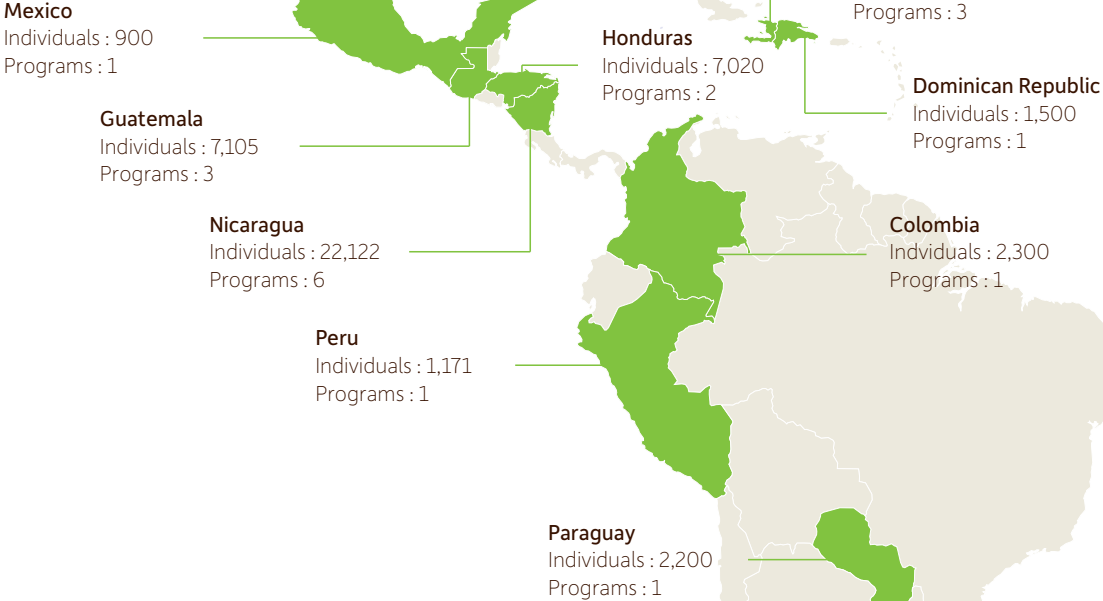
The proceeds were designated toward the Honduras Orocuina & Liure program, which held a special connection for the congregation. The program began when church member Joel Kempf was on staff with Mennonite Central Committee in Honduras, and he was involved in its inception.

Yoder commented, “We are grateful for the many people who helped out with this project, through prayer, labor, materials and money. We were blessed to have used our resources to help others utilize their land to feed their families and communities throughout the world.”

“I am so grateful to God for the numerous people in our congregation here at Deep Run East, as well as the local community, who have faithfully used their gifts: gifts of visioning, organizing, generosity, planting and harvesting, in our Crops for Hunger ministry,” said Pastor Ken Burkholder. “Their willingness to utilize their gifts brings glory to God and blesses the lives of others around the world through Growing Hope Globally.”

Our Global Impact

This year, **127** US Growing Projects in **21** states joined together with other funders to support **46** agricultural development programs in **30** countries, helping **238,583** people find lasting solutions to hunger.



* Indicates a cross-border program
** Not shown due to ongoing security issues



Jawanda Embraces His Gifts

Zimbabwe Mwenezi Program

Gender responsibilities were very clearly assigned in Mwenezi. Women did the physical work in the fields, grew legumes, and cooked for their families. Men did the technical work in the fields and grew cereals. Men did not cook.

When Mennonite Central Committee and local partner SCORE introduced the idea of intercropping legumes and cereals, the whole system began to change. Women’s legumes and men’s cereal crops were traditionally grown in separate fields, but when they began intercropping them in the same field, they had to work together.

At first, Jawanda was skeptical about the idea of mixing crops, but he set up a trial plot and quickly saw that the new practices worked. “To my surprise, there was no competition for moisture with the intercrop.” As the soil health improved, so did the yields. Soon Jawanda was producing a variety of crops on his land.

Following tradition, he still wanted to take care of the cereals while his wife cared for the legumes, but he also knew that if they were to be successful, they would have to learn from each other. They soon found that they enjoyed farming as a couple. “We work together, growing crops that we both care about. This has increased the time we spend together and sometimes we discuss other things like our family needs, budget, aspirations, food security and social issues.”

Jawanda recognized the power of working as a team with his wife, but still believed that cooking was women’s work. When SCORE announced a “Men Can Cook” competition, he joined, but only to laugh at those who were eager to participate. “In my family, no man cooks. You marry so your wife can cook for you.”

He was surprised at how quickly his friends’ cooking skills were improving. They were really looking forward to the competition, so Jawanda stepped up his game and started learning how to cook from his wife. Embarrassed to cook in front of others, he opted for nighttime lessons. “My wife would teach me when the kids had gone to bed. I was afraid of being shamed by other men in the village.”

When the day came, everyone was surprised to see Jawanda in the competition, but thanks to his wife, he was ready. He did well, taking third place. “I felt so proud of myself. The affirmation from women, men, boys and girls in the community and the shiny teapot that I won made me feel like a real Master Chef. I immediately realized that I had an inert desire to cook that had never been explored. It has been buried under the culture and our ways of doing things.”

His competitive spirit and newfound love for cooking lit a spark of innovation. Jawanda learned how to process food and began asking about recipes so he could win the next competition. “It was clear to me that child malnutrition was a problem, so I decided to come up with something that could help address this challenge.”

He experimented and soon came up with signature recipes for young children. “I came up with a recipe for porridge made up of corn flour, pigeon pea flour and lablab flour. We have grinding mills for corn, but no miller was prepared to crush the pigeon pea and lablab for us. I started crushing the beans on my own, with my wife’s help.”

Jawanda is no longer in it for the prizes. He is now a teacher, using his newfound gifts to travel around teaching other men and women how to make nutritious meals for their children.



“Child nutrition was a problem, so I decided to come up with something that could help address this challenge.”

—Jawanda





Providing A Community Service

India West Champaran Program

In the Northwest corner of India's Bihar State, a group of farmers is using their gifts to make a positive impact on their community. In addition to serving those in their own villages, these twenty private service providers have also assisted those in neighboring communities, impacting the food security of nearly 3,000 families.

They were trained as private service providers as part of the India West Champaran program, implemented by Catholic Relief Services and local partner Bettiah Diocesan Social Services Society. Each person was focused on either seed drill operation, custom herbicide application, or livestock management. They soon began to offer their services to other members of the community for a fee.

75% of the farmers in the area are now using seed drilling services and most of the remaining 25% have land that is either too small or not level enough for the seed drill to operate. Bhubneswar, one of the seed drill private service providers, is enthusiastic about the big difference that he has been able to make in his community in only a short time. "You will observe that I have changed the cultivation method in my entire village."

The impact has been tremendous. The smallholder farmers who have taken advantage of the seed drilling services have been able to reduce their rice sowing costs from \$5.60 per .01 hectare to only \$1.30. With more efficient planting technology, they have found that they are using 37% less seed, which also reduces their costs. Those who are using the services of the custom herbicide applicators have reduced their weeding costs from \$2 per .01 hectare to only \$0.34. Growing their food at a reduced cost means that families have more money to spend on other investments.



"The decision to become a pashu sakhi was a turning point in my life."

—Saroj



In West Champaran, women tend to be the goat keepers, so the program was strategic in selecting women to be the livestock management private service providers, known locally as "pashu sakhis." Many goats were being lost due to poor health and avoidable diseases, so pashu sakhis began offering services like deworming and vaccination camps. They also conduct home visits to advise goat keepers on best practices including disease treatment, bloodless castration, hair and hoof cutting, appropriate shelter and safe drinking water. They sell goat and cattle feed as an additional service and source of income for their families.

Goat keepers have come to greatly appreciate the work of the pashu sakhis. They are willing to pay for deworming and vaccination services because they know it makes a difference. In fact, there were no goat deaths in the area due to diseases last year. During a difficult year, with local flooding as well as lockdowns due to COVID-19, goat keeping emerged as a promising way for small and marginal farmers to increase their resilience.

In addition to the food security benefits, serving as pashu sakhis has helped these women to become community leaders in the midst of a culture where women are often seen as secondary citizens. Saroj commented, "The decision to become a pashu sakhi was a turning point in my life." Serving her community has boosted her self-esteem. She has established herself as a small entrepreneur in the village and has earned the respect of her family and neighbors.

A New Take On An Ancient Practice

Paraguay Lower Chaco Program

Indigenous communities lived off the land for centuries in the resource-rich Gran Chaco region. They hunted, fished, ate local fruit, harvested local honey and made handicrafts for additional income. When an area was no longer productive or a disaster struck, they moved to another area, free to go wherever they could find food.

This has all changed over the last several decades as more and more land is taken over by large commercial farms and private landowners, many times illegally. The indigenous people no longer have the freedom to traverse the region, hunting and gathering. They have been forced to adapt to a new way of life, raising livestock and planting vegetable gardens to grow the food they need to survive.

Church World Service and local partner Pastoral Social Benjamin Aceval made plans to assist ten communities with training on fruit, vegetable and honey production as part of the Paraguay Lower Chaco program. The program began during turbulent times. There was a prolonged drought in 2019, followed by a dengue fever outbreak and the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020.

Program staff adjusted quickly and began offering remote technical assistance to farmers. “I am very grateful for the technicians,” commented Leonardo, “because of them, I am successful. I’ve improved my production and have learned so many new things through their training.”

Although they had been harvesting wild honey for years, few community members knew how to manage commercial beehives, so program staff coached them on matters such as checking the queen’s egg positions and the addition of honeycombs with stamped



wax. “Previously we didn’t understand these good practices”, said Luis, one of the beekeepers, “Now we have been trained on how to handle the hives and manage the harvest so that we get greater production”.

As beekeepers have begun to use improved bee boxes, their production has improved significantly, increasing by 75%. “We’re seeing increases in the quality of the honey, thanks to what we’ve learned from the technicians,” commented Luciano. Higher quality honey comes with a higher profit. This improved product is fetching as much as 50% more than honey harvested through traditional methods.

Honey production quickly became a major opportunity for the community. Beekeepers could sell honey to other community members and pay for food items that were lacking during the drought. “Thanks to the honey production, we are able to feed our children,” said Mariana. “We are able to buy food, shoes and clothing when we sell our honey,” added Estelvina.

These indigenous communities are building upon a skill that their ancestors have passed down through the centuries, and are using it to adapt to their new way of life.



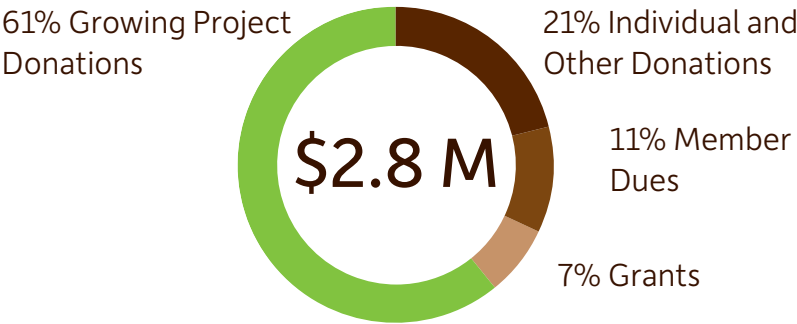
“Thanks to the honey production, we are able to feed our children.”

— Mariana

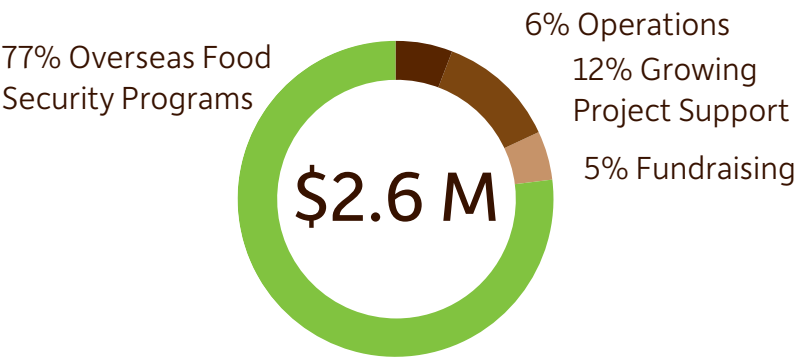


2020-2021 Financial Report

Income



Expenses



Partners

Implementing Organizations

- ♥ Catholic Relief Services
- ♥ Church of the Brethren Global Food Initiative
- ♥ Church World Service
- ♥ Covenant World Relief & Development
- ♥ Lutheran World Relief
- ♥ Mennonite Central Committee
- ♥ Nazarene Compassionate Ministries
- ♥ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- ♥ World Hope International
- ♥ World Renew

Supporting Organizations

- ♥ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Week of Compassion
- ♥ United Church of Christ - Global H.O.P.E
- ♥ United Methodist Committee on Relief

Affiliated Organizations

- ♥ American Friends of Asian Rural Institute
- ♥ Asian Rural Institute
- ♥ Bread for the World
- ♥ The Alliance to End Hunger

2020-2021 Board Members

- ♥ Arlyn Schipper – Growing Project
- ♥ Bev Abma – Emerita
- ♥ Bruce White – Catholic Relief Services
- ♥ Carol Bremer-Bennett – World Renew
- ♥ Carol Sloan – Emerita
- ♥ Claude Schrock – Growing Project / Mennonite Central Committee
- ♥ Dwight Rohrer – Growing Project
- ♥ Gary Cook – Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- ♥ Jerry Lundeen – Growing Project
- ♥ Jim Elwell – Growing Project
- ♥ Jim Rufenacht – Growing Project
- ♥ Jim Schmidt – Growing Project
- ♥ John Lyon – World Hope International
- ♥ Karis Gutter – Corteva Agriscience

- ♥ Karon Speckman – Growing Project
- ♥ Kevin Skunes – Growing Project
- ♥ Kirby Gould – Christian Church Foundation
- ♥ LaRaine Salmon – Growing Project
- ♥ Leah Stolte-Doerfler – Growing Project / Lutheran World Relief
- ♥ Mark Swanson – Growing Project / Covenant World Relief & Development
- ♥ Maurice Bloem – Church World Service
- ♥ Norm Braksick – Emeritus
- ♥ Steve Witt – Growing Project
- ♥ Tad Fannin – Nazarene Compassionate Ministries
- ♥ Wubshet Loha – Bread for the World





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