



GROWING
HOPE
G L O B A L L Y

Annual Report 2021-2022



As a Christian response to hunger, we link the grassroots energy and commitment of rural communities in the U.S. with the capability and desire of smallholder farmers in developing countries to grow lasting solutions to hunger.

Letter from the President

This year's celebration of Pentecost was particularly moving for me. Jesus sent the gift of the Holy Spirit to the early church, after he was crucified, resurrected and arisen. He knew that the apostles would be better together, with the gift of encouragement that the Holy Spirit continues to provide each of us.

At Growing Hope Globally, we continue to be encouraged by what God is doing together with all of us. The mission to overcome hunger calls each of us to contribute, serving with our gifts to build God's Kingdom on earth, as it will be in heaven. I am eternally grateful for you using your gifts to serve our global community. Together, we have served more than 200,000 people this past year through 47 programs in 30 different countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America.

More than two years into the challenges brought about by the global pandemic, we have continued and will continue to face obstacles to the work we do together. But for the first time in almost three years, I had the opportunity to visit

one of our programs with our team, located in the Montes de María region of northern Colombia. I met a farmer there who has gone from a subsistence farmer to an agricultural entrepreneur, thanks to our local partner Sembrandopaz, (Cultivating Peace in Spanish). He started selling honey from his beehives, making cheese from his cow's milk, and growing countless varieties of fruits and vegetables. With each new enterprise, he has not only been able to feed himself, his family, and his community, but also provide economic opportunities for the people of Montes de María.

I hope you will enjoy reading more about the transformation of Montes de María but also the many more ways in which people are honoring God by working together and in partnership with Growing Hope Globally.

Gratefully,

Max Finberg

Max Finberg
President

**“Two are better than one,
because they have a good
return for their labor.”**

- Ecclesiastes 4:9





Better Together

Located in North Central Illinois, the Somonauk Growing Project began in 2005. They held a harvest celebration their first year and it quickly became an annual event. In 2006, the Earlville Growing Project began just 15 miles away. They weren't ready to host a harvest celebration that first year, so they joined in with the Somonauk group. It went so well that the two groups have been holding combined celebrations ever since!

Meanwhile, the Ottawa-Barrington Growing Project, which had begun in 2004, was holding their own event just 25 miles away. As the years wore on, scheduling became more difficult with two harvest celebrations in close proximity and crowds started to dwindle. So, about six years ago, the groups decided to join forces. "Doing this together saves the work of doing three separate celebrations," said Paul Youngstrum of the Ottawa-Barrington Growing Project, "Everyone is responsible for something and we all pitch in."

"It is like anything else, the bigger and better it is, the more people

will come," said Jerry Lundeen. And come they do! The event typically draws crowds of 300 to 500 people. It begins with a worship service led by a different church each year. With representation from nine different denominations, the event is an opportunity to unite in a time when so much divides.

After worship, lunch is served. The organizers work hard to get all of the food donated so that any funds raised can go to Growing Hope Globally. There is a freewill offering during lunch and various items for sale like photo calendars, soy candles, and farm equipment turned into garden art.

The biggest fundraiser is the pie auction. Bakers from each church bring their best pies and the competition is fierce! The auction usually fetches about \$10,000 and the entire event typically brings in about \$15,000. Rather than dividing the funds between the three Growing Projects, the harvest celebration funds are kept separate. "One of the smartest things we did was kept the funds together rather than worrying about who gets

credit,” said Lundeen. Participants vote which of three overseas programs will be supported by the event by putting their change or bills in the corresponding jar.

Other activities include apple cider pressing, pumpkin carving, a “corn box” for children, pedal tractor races, sheep shearing, face painting, antique farm equipment displays, horse drawn wagon rides, a stream table to demonstrate how soil erosion works and much more. “The great thing about having an event like this is it gives us something else to talk about and invite people to,” said Youngstrum, “People see that our Growing Projects are helpful, meaningful and informative. Although we do raise funds, it is not just about asking for money.”

In addition to the harvest celebration, the groups have also held regional meetings to welcome overseas guests from Growing Hope Globally or share ideas. In 2020, the Ottawa-Barrington Growing Project organized the first Hike to Help End Hunger at a local preserve, inviting others from the area to join in. It was both a fundraiser and an educational

event, with stops along the way to learn about hunger, farming and the preserve. The timing was great as people were feeling cooped up due to COVID. “It was a great outlet for families to go somewhere and do something,” said Youngstrum.

The Ottawa-Barrington group is itself a testament to two very different communities working together to make a difference. Separated by 80 miles, the rural Lutheran Church in Ottawa and the suburban Barrington United Methodist Church were initially united by their desire to do something about hunger. Together, they have come up with some unique ways to raise funds. Barrington United Methodist has a great worship area and in recent years has hosted classical concerts with all proceeds going to support the Growing Project. Ottawa farmers John and Sue Hughes grow sweetcorn. Volunteers come on Saturday evening to harvest a pickup load and drive it up to Barrington for Sunday morning. Church members can take as much fresh corn as they can use in exchange for a donation to the project.





Blessed To Be A Blessing

One day, back in 2012, Glen Engle drove past the Chiques Church of the Brethren in Elizabethtown, PA. He saw a field sign there indicating their involvement with Growing Hope Globally (formerly Foods Resource Bank) and his curiosity was piqued. Around the same time, Glen's wife Eileen attended a work day at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) where she heard about Growing Hope Globally. "We put our heads together and thought, 'this sounds like something we ought to do at our church'," said Eileen.

So, they brought the idea to Media Mennonite church. The congregation had purchased some land, planning to construct a new church building in the future. They agreed to use it for a Growing Project until they were ready to break ground. Glen and Doug Engle agreed to farm the land. Others pitched in for the seed and fertilizer.

The first year's harvest proceeds went to support the Guatemala Sibinal program, implemented by MCC. The following March, the Engles had the chance to travel

to Guatemala and see how the money their Growing Project had raised was being used. "It was a very meaningful experience for us," said Eileen, "we had never traveled outside of the US and Canada before. We were impressed, everything was so well-planned. I have tried to encourage others to go and see for themselves, but unfortunately it hasn't happened yet."

The Oxford Growing Project continued to support the program in Guatemala for a few more years, but then decided to support another MCC program, this one in Palestine. In 2015, they had the opportunity to host guests from the Palestine Gaza program, inviting church members and others who were involved in the project to attend. Hearing first-hand about the daily challenges faced by Palestinians was eye-opening and hearts and minds were changed by their visit.

In 2018, Media Mennonite Church was ready to expand, building a new church facility on their land and changing their name to Waterway Church to reflect their

new location. After 6 great years, the future of the Growing Project seemed to be in jeopardy with no place to go. But then Phil Johnson, a retired strawberry farmer, and his wife Ruth Ann offered their farmland for the project, allowing it to continue. Along with this new land came broader participation in the project, with additional farmers pitching in to help. Weaver's Toasted Grain also purchases the crop at a premium, helping to further extend the impact. Church member Ryan King also decided to pitch in by expanding his garden and selling produce at a farm stand.

With the move to the new location, the church mission team has gotten involved in choosing which overseas program the Growing Project will support each year. They continue to remain true to their roots, selecting programs implemented by MCC. Jess Engle, Glen and Eileen's daughter-in-law is currently the chair of the mission committee. "We look at MCC projects that are near missionaries we support or projects we have supported before. We pray for guidance and then agree on one," said Jess. Over the

years the church has supported programs in Guatemala, Palestine, Nepal and Mexico.

Phil Johnson passed away in April 2020, but Ruth Ann and their children decided to keep using the land for the Growing Project with Ross Johnson, Phil's son, helping to lead the Growing Project. Phil appreciated the saying, "You won't be remembered for what you gathered, but rather for what you scattered" and tried to live accordingly. Ross said, "One of his satisfactions was knowing that the farm was in good hands. It had been a blessing to him all these years, and he was able to pass that blessing on to other people."

Indeed, that is exactly what the Oxford, PA Growing Project has been doing for the past 10 years: using their blessings to bless others.



Local and Global Impact

This year, **130** U.S. Growing Projects in **21** states joined together with other funders to support **47** agricultural development programs in **30** countries, helping **200,398** people find lasting solutions to hunger.

Mexico
Individuals : 714
Programs : 1

Guatemala
Individuals : 6,385
Programs : 3

Nicaragua
Individuals : 14,783
Programs : 6

Peru
Individuals : 1,171
Programs : 1

Paraguay
Individuals : 2,200
Programs : 1

Honduras
Individuals : 8,137
Programs : 2

Haiti
Individuals : 5,625
Programs : 3

Dominican Republic
Individuals : 1,500
Programs : 1

Colombia
Individuals : 2,300
Programs : 1

Sierra Leone
Individuals : 420
Programs : 1*

Liberia
Individuals : 420
Programs : 1*

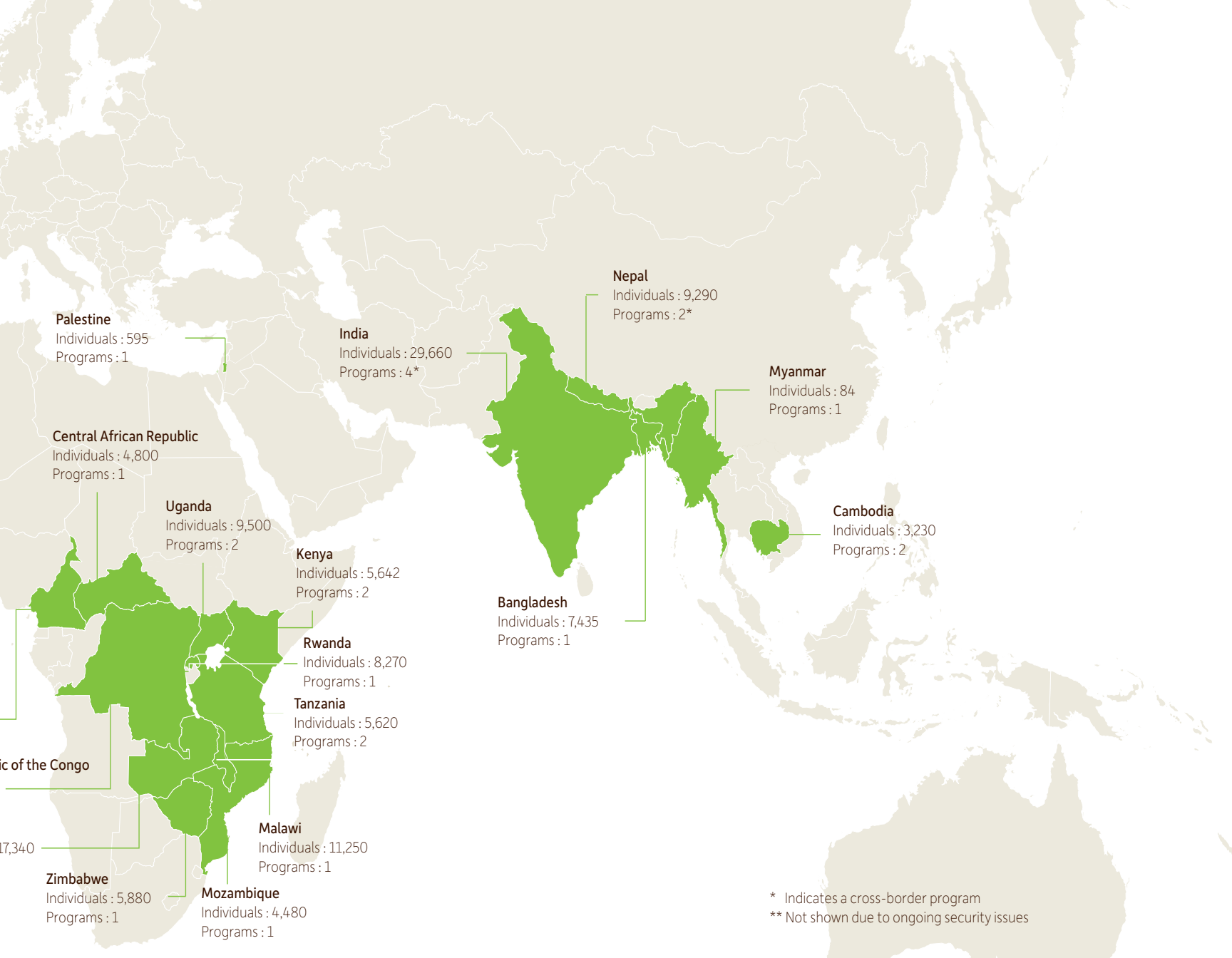
Burkina Faso
Individuals : 1,747
Programs : 1

Cameroon
Individuals : 3,780
Programs : 1

Democratic Republic of Congo
Individuals : 140
Programs : 1

Zambia
Individuals : 1
Programs : 2

West Africa**
Individuals : 28,000
Programs : 1



Palestine
Individuals : 595
Programs : 1

Central African Republic
Individuals : 4,800
Programs : 1

Uganda
Individuals : 9,500
Programs : 2

Kenya
Individuals : 5,642
Programs : 2

Rwanda
Individuals : 8,270
Programs : 1

Tanzania
Individuals : 5,620
Programs : 2

Malawi
Individuals : 11,250
Programs : 1

Zimbabwe
Individuals : 5,880
Programs : 1

Mozambique
Individuals : 4,480
Programs : 1

India
Individuals : 29,660
Programs : 4*

Nepal
Individuals : 9,290
Programs : 2*

Myanmar
Individuals : 84
Programs : 1

Cambodia
Individuals : 3,230
Programs : 2

Bangladesh
Individuals : 7,435
Programs : 1

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

More Than Enough In Zambia

Life can be difficult for women in rural Zambia, and for their families too. Despite most people working in agriculture, 80% of those in rural areas live below the poverty line and they often face food insecurity. 35% of children are stunted due to poor nutrition. 47% of married women have experienced violence by their spouse.

It is in this context that the Zambia Lundazi program works. Implemented by World Renew in partnership with the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Synod of Zambia, the program serves through the local church to address the challenge of food security for 3,300 households. But it goes far beyond just having enough to eat. The program also seeks justice for women and the opportunity for children to thrive.

Beauty joined a nutrition group when her daughter, Chimwemwe, was 11 months old. Chimwemwe was eating porridge regularly with the rest of the family, but she wasn't growing well. She was constantly sick and wasn't gaining weight like she should. This meant that

Beauty had to spend a lot of time at the hospital and had less time to work in the field and to prepare the household's meals. The money that was meant to buy other things at home was used to buy medicine for Chimwemwe.

After joining the nutrition group, Beauty learned that she should prepare a separate meal for her daughter, supplementing the carbohydrates in the porridge with groundnuts, mashed fruits and vegetables. Because Beauty made a simple change, Chimwemwe is now growing normally and doesn't fall ill because she has a balanced diet.

Mr. and Mrs. Mwale have ten children, five boys and five girls. Before they joined the gender justice program in September 2021, Mr. Mwale made all of the decisions for their household, never considering that his wife might have a valuable perspective to add. "Culture taught me that a man is wiser than a woman in everything and that the woman is just his property," he said. Once they began participating in lessons, it quickly became apparent that their family



would be better off if Mr. and Mrs. Mwale worked and made decisions together. This realization has brought a new sense of peace to their household. Not only are they working in the same direction for the good of their family, they also have a fresh understanding of what God wants for them as a couple and they are working together to serve Him.

Magodi and his wife Modester have twelve children, seven boys and five girls. They have been involved with CCAP for several years and were part of a group of 40 people that was trained on Conservation Agriculture and then provided with four oxen-drawn rippers (a ripper is a minimum-tillage tool that opens a narrow furrow for planting, but leaves the rest of the soil undisturbed).

After experimenting with Conservation Agriculture and seeing greatly improved yields, the couple was convinced. “Before we were introduced to Conservation Agriculture, we never used to harvest more than sixty 50 kg bags in terms of maize”, said Magodi.

The family’s 2021 harvest was two hundred 50 kg bags. They sold 120 bags and made a nice profit, which allowed them to build a storage shed to keep their future farm produce safe. Asked what the family would do with the remaining bags, Modester said, “We kept eighty 50 kg bags for our consumption. If we don’t exhaust all the bags before the next harvest, we will sell any surplus we have.”

While Conservation Agriculture practices are a big part of their increased harvest, the use of an oxen-drawn ripper instead of a hand-held hoe allows the family to farm two and a half hectares instead of just one.

In the future, Magodi and Modester want to grow more crops, especially soybeans and maize, sell the produce and use the proceeds to buy a motorbike. This will ease the transport challenges the family is currently facing. Magodi also indicated that if things go according to their plans, they would want to buy their own rippers, to reduce the farmer to ripper ratio in their Conservation Agriculture group.



Cultivating Peace in Colombia

The decades-long armed conflict in Colombia centers around a struggle for control over land, natural resources and access routes to the coasts and borders for trade (legal or not). Due to its strategic location and resources, the Montes de María region on the Caribbean coast has frequently been under dispute from various armed groups. The people have suffered massacres and forced displacement, caught in the middle.

Local partner Sembrandopaz, translated “Cultivating Peace”, began working in Montes de María in 2004. Agricultural development is one of the many ways they are working with local communities to rebuild and bring healing. Their holistic approach involves helping the whole human being to develop - a process that is more of a marathon than a sprint. Ricardo, Executive Director of Sembrandopaz, expressed his thanks for the ongoing partnership of Mennonite Central Committee and Growing Hope Globally since 2010. “You need to build trust before anyone will listen to you,” he said, “Most donors don’t understand that and will work with you for only 3 years.”

One of the ways Sembrandopaz encourages communities to heal is by participating in community beautification contests. Complete with judging and prizes, the contests help to rebuild community pride. For example, one community came together to paint a welcome sign, and residents planted flowers.

The same community collaborated to improve their water system. Previously, they drew water from a central well with buckets. Collecting water was an hour-long, exhausting task. Sembrandopaz helped them build a water tank and pipes to bring water to the center of the community. Now, water is pumped directly to each home, and because the entire community helped to construct the water system, they know how to fix it if it breaks. Judith, a community leader, explained, “Before Sembrandopaz, our community never had help from anybody.”

Due to the conflict, land ownership is very complicated and many people are forced to rent from others. But with no collateral, bank loans are very difficult to obtain,



so community members often had to take loans from microfinance institutions to purchase the inputs they needed for farming. Interest rates were high, often three to four times the amount borrowed, and payment was required immediately after harvest, which meant that farmers couldn't sell their produce at the best prices.

Recognizing this challenge, Sembrandopaz started a community agriculture fund from which members can borrow for agricultural projects and repay after harvest. The low interest rates allow farmers to wait a month or two and sell their crops for what they are truly worth. "With Sembrandopaz, there isn't the pressure of high interest rates and to sell on a timeline. There is flexibility with loans. A lot of other loan options would loan for a growing season with a lot of pressure. Sembrandopaz is not a bank. They put the money back into a rotating fund for other producers," said Judith.

In addition to community work, Sembrandopaz has an experimental farm. It was originally purchased

as a place for displaced people to come and stay. The farm manager arrived in 2008 after fleeing from his home community without so much as a change of clothes. Within the realities of a conflict, people had tried to kill him because he was a legal representative for his community, but thankfully he survived. He found refuge and protection at the farm and has been there working to restore it ever since. The land had been used for cattle grazing and was very degraded, but thanks to years of careful restoration, it has been transformed into a refuge inhabited by a wide variety of plants and animals. The farm is now used for community training events, learning tours and more.

The farm manager still laments the fact that he cannot safely return to his home, but has hope for the future. "Fifteen years after displacement, I only own land where I can't live anymore, but I know that with God all things are possible and I have faith that we will have our own land again someday."



2021-2022 Financial Report

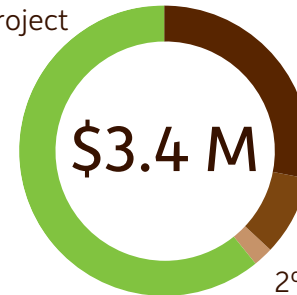
Income

61% Growing Project
Donations

28% Individual and
Other Donations

9% Member
Dues

2% Grants



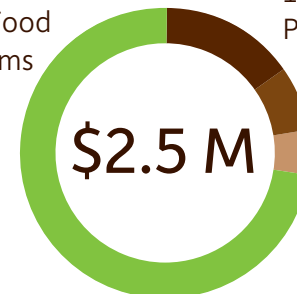
Expenses

73% Overseas Food
Security Programs

15% Growing
Project Support

7% Operations

5% Fundraising



We work hard to steward donations well. Only 12 cents of every dollar donated is used for operational expenses.

“After over 50 years of turning the soil, we have decided to give back out of God’s goodness so as to help bless others through Growing Hope Globally. What better way to share those blessings than by giving to those who till the land in other parts of the globe?”

- Jerry & Pat Clark



Our Partners

Implementing Organizations



Supporting Organizations



Affiliated Organizations



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