



h
hesperian
health guides

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2013 – June 2014

Dear friends,

Hesperian has experienced exponential growth this year in the number of people accessing our health information. We have been amazed by the millions we have reached through a variety of traditional and digital paths—numbers we never imagined possible.

Even before the year ended, we surpassed 200,000 downloads of our Spanish and English mobile app “Safe Pregnancy and Birth,” while international partners are engaged in adapting it in another 7 languages. People are visiting our website from 222 countries and territories (of a total of 254). They’re finding what they are looking for—from women’s health to first aid—and sharing it with others, then returning for more. After the United States, the largest numbers of people accessing hesperian.org are crossing the “digital divide” from Mexico and Brazil. We have free materials online in 31 languages, and now offer printed books in 12! In the coming year, we will further expand these distribution channels, launching new materials in even more languages.

We have invested an enormous amount of work to ensure that Hesperian’s health information online and in print is always current and up-to-date. Then we work with our partners so that new information ripples out through dozens of languages and books. An almost invisible achievement this past year is developing and implementing systems to make that happen—with a staff size relatively unchanged from when we were working in only two languages and exclusively in print.

This growth in numbers is exciting because it is measurable. More meaningful is the harder to measure accomplishment of helping so many more people address difficult, persistent health challenges. At a time when global political economies deny the right to health to millions and the inability of eroded systems to deliver care is clearer than ever, it’s gratifying to know that providing people with respectful, practical and trustworthy advice can strengthen their ability to collectively improve health for their families, their neighbors, their co-workers, and their communities.

The oversized impact of Hesperian’s small staff is due to our hard work, the efforts of a growing cadre of volunteers, and deepening relationships with historical partners while extending our outreach to new ones. We thank you for your support and ask you to join us in making it possible to reach even further—to achieve Health for All.

Sincerely,



Sarah Shannon, Executive Director

A PERFECT MATCH: HESPERIAN & LIBRARIES

Hesperian shares a core belief with public libraries: Information should be freely available to everyone. This makes collaboration between us a perfect match, leading to more and better health information for patrons to explore, discuss and take home.

Thanks to support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, four libraries—in Villanueva and Marsella, Colombia, and two in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa—received on-site training from Hesperian staff in how to use our print books and HealthWiki as a community resource. As part of the training, each library has now set up—and regularly updates—webpages that alert users to local health-related news, events and activities and provide easy access to the HealthWiki.

These webpages also highlight the specific HealthWiki information most requested by their communities. In addition to improving access for local users, this process also

helps Hesperian learn how to customize our HealthWiki for other libraries around the world. The number of people from Colombia and South Africa accessing the HealthWiki has increased significantly as library users find health information online.

Print books are another critical part of the picture. With support from the Branson Family Foundation, the African Library Project placed Hesperian books in 220 community libraries in Malawi, Sierra Leone and Ghana, in rural villages where access to health information is hard to come by (and reliable healthcare is even scarcer). The African Library Project also distributed Hesperian books in English and Chichewa to librarians from these countries who attended the annual ALP Library Summit. The librarians are excited to use the books in community and primary school libraries, and as science texts in classrooms.



GREATER REACH

Digital Formats Expand Access

There's been a dramatic increase in the number of people using the Hesperian HealthWiki, our online home for free, web-based versions of Hesperian's books. Visits have more than doubled, to more than 1.3 million during the past year.

While that's exciting, we're even more delighted to see that well over half those visitors now come from the global South, many of whom are accessing information that's difficult or even dangerous to obtain in their home countries. 55% of HealthWiki visits now originate in Latin



America, and large numbers also come from India, the Philippines and Saudi Arabia.

And here's one more statistic that's not only gratifying but amazing. A study by graduate students at New York University revealed that HealthWiki visitors shared what they found with an average of 21 other people! Multiplied by the number of visits, that means that almost 30 million people benefitted from information provided by the Hesperian HealthWiki last year.

Our library of searchable health information is ever-growing, and new resources in English, Spanish and many other languages are constantly being added. The most frequently viewed topics are:

- nutrition
- stomach and intestinal pain
- medications
- water purification
- basic first aid
- safe pregnancy and birth
- safe abortion
- family planning
- sexual assault

This material is downloadable as PDFs for use offline as well. Now there are editions in 31 languages besides English and Spanish available for free download on Hesperian's website!

What's New in the HealthWiki?

Hesperian added 10 books to our HealthWiki this year:

- *Where There Is No Dentist*
- *Helping Children Who Are Deaf* (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese)
- *Helping Children Who Are Blind* (English, Spanish)
- *A Book for Midwives* (English, Spanish)
- *A Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities* (Spanish)
- Plus new chapters from the *NEW Where There Is No Doctor* (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Swahili)

We are thrilled to make this lifesaving and health-promoting information now even more widely available through our online HealthWiki.

We couldn't do what we do without a group of devoted volunteers, 24 of whom contributed over 4,000 hours of their time this year. Our digital volunteer team includes proofreaders, coders, designers, image manipulators, translators, mobile programmers and various other detail-oriented geniuses who tirelessly lend their skills and time to developing new digital presentations of Hesperian's materials. They come to Hesperian via ads or through family, friends and fans.

Those same volunteers helped us with the coding and programming work to make the HealthWiki mobile friendly. Now people everywhere can also access



this information using tablets, cell phones and other mobile devices.

In particular, we offer our deep thanks to:

Luke Sherman

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PEOPLE-CENTERED HEALTH

New Resources to Address New Challenges

NEW Where There Is No Doctor

A completely revised edition of *Where There Is No Doctor* is well underway. Incorporating our 41 years of experience and dialog with partners all around the world, the new book will maintain the much-loved accessibility and promotion of self-reliance of earlier editions, but will focus more on the changing needs of an increasingly urban global population.

As we work on the new edition, we've been publishing completed chapters on our website in several languages.

Among the new content released this year is a greatly expanded first aid chapter in Spanish, the product of extensive testing and review by our partners in Latin America, as well as up-to-date information on pain in the belly and gut, pre- and postnatal care, menstruation, nutrition and how to improve community health through water and sanitation projects. We're also developing new content on diabetes, heart disease, cancer and family planning, specifically designed for community-based action in resource-poor settings.

Helping Children Live with HIV

Children growing up in places where HIV is endemic experience medical problems, trauma and loss of loved ones at a young age, whether or not they individually are infected with HIV. To serve their unique needs, Hesperian is hard at work on a new book, *Helping Children Live with HIV*. It's designed to reduce parent-to-child HIV transmission, help children cope with death and grief, prevent sexual abuse and provide for the medical and nutritional needs of HIV-positive babies and children. Draft chapters of the book and specially designed single-page topical handouts are now being field-tested in India, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We're looking forward to feedback and suggestions from our partners on how to improve this much-needed resource.



Coming Soon!

Health Actions for Women

Written to help women win better health, this companion to *Where Women Have No Doctor* uses a whole-community approach. Its stories, games and activities engage people of all genders and ages and enable facilitators to mobilize around a range of contentious women's health issues. When community organizers and health educators in 23 countries field-tested the book, 80% said it made them more confident discussing topics like sexual health, violence and gender roles. According to Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards, "No other resource today provides such concrete tools to engage communities and empower women of all ages to build lasting change from the ground up." *Health Actions for Women* will be released this winter.

A Workers' Guide to Health and Safety

This vital resource covers not only health hazards but also social problems like sexual harassment and low wages. Its innovative approach helps workers identify and prevent workplace hazards where there are few occupational health experts and poorly enforced labor laws, and also shows how to create long-term change by building factory safety committees, forming strategic alliances and better understanding international labor rights. With an emphasis on the garment, shoe and electronics industries, it includes



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easy-to-use chemical identification charts and discussions of the uses and limitations of protective equipment. *A Worker's Guide to Health and Safety* will be out this winter.

Treating Cervical Cancer

We produced new material on treating cervical pre-cancer with cryotherapy. This is a game-changer, particularly in poor communities, and our step-by-step description of how to do it breaks ground for clarity and accessibility. We've posted it online, made it available as a PDF and are adding it to the upcoming English, Spanish and French editions of *A Book for Midwives*.

BOOKS WITHOUT BORDERS

More Resources in More Languages

Reliable, easy to understand health information in over 80 languages is what makes Hesperian unique. New translations completed and launched this year include *A Book for Midwives* in Nepalese, and editions of *A Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities* in Armenian and in Braille. And we've helped partners initiate editions of *Disabled Village Children* in Vietnamese, *Helping Children Who Are Blind* in Braille and *Where There Is No Doctor* in the languages Haligaynon (Philippines) and Bisaya (Malaysia). Hesperian staff and volunteers supported these groups and the 68 other organizations currently in the process of developing locally adapted editions of Hesperian's books to use in their programs and with their communities.

Hesperian has worked with our translation partners to make 12 titles in 10 languages available for distribution in the US. Diaspora communities and travelers can now get "print on demand" copies of these books. Since we released our first print-on-demand book—the Haitian Creole edition of *Where Women Have No Doctor*—in March of 2013, we've brought out 8 more: Chinese and Russian editions of *A Community Guide to Environmental Health*, Burmese and Lao editions of *Where Women Have No Doctor*, an Urdu edition of *A Book for Midwives*, and Nepalese editions of *A Book for Midwives*, *A Health Handbook for Women With Disabilities* and *Where Women Have No Doctor*. Several French editions are now being completed.

Community Health information in Swahili

Swahili, the national language of 4 countries, is spoken by over 140 million people throughout Africa. And it's now the most recent language launched online in Hesperian's digital commons. Our Tanzanian partner COHIBISA, a nonprofit based in Dar Es Salaam, does fantastic work with youth in the districts of Rufiji and Lindi on water, sanitation and hygiene, and other environmental issues. COHIBISA has already produced the Swahili edition of *A Community Guide to Environmental Health*, and we are now collaborating on *NEW Where There Is No Doctor* chapters in Swahili to create a collection of sharable and adaptable resources for community health workers throughout the region.



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Books Shipped Around the World

With support from our generous donors, Hesperian's Gratis Book Fund enabled us to reach even more people this past year. We distributed 2,084 free books and pamphlets — each one a priceless and permanent benefit to a teacher, health worker or community leader struggling to bring simple, basic health care to his or her community.

Each letter and email we receive requesting free books is read and answered by our steadfast Gratis Book

volunteers, Lee Gallery and Susan Heller. They must make painful choices based on where books will benefit the most people. Each book we can send is then prepared and shipped by our dedicated book-packing volunteers Stan Sprague, Judy Tart, Cecille Garcia, Calvin Chiu and Benji Dossetter.

As a community health worker in Ghana reports: "The books are doing marvelous things, especially for the youth. In the evenings when everyone has finished working, we gather under a tree and I read and explain some of the content to them, topics like family planning, eating healthily, AIDS... Thank you for thinking of us."

Over 40 Years with Peace Corps Volunteers

Hesperian continues to work with Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) to get more books in more languages to the volunteers' host communities. Among the outstanding efforts of this most committed cadre of internationalists, the Dokoto Project of the Friends of Mali RPCV group is translating *Where There Is No Doctor* into Bambara, an edition eagerly awaited by community health groups in Mali. The Ethiopia-Eritrea RPCVs have established a Legacy Fund to send health information, especially regarding HIV and AIDS, and copies of *Where There Is No Doctor* to Ethiopia and Eritrea. By helping to distribute and translate Hesperian books, these two groups model how RPCVs can help Hesperian information reach communities in need.



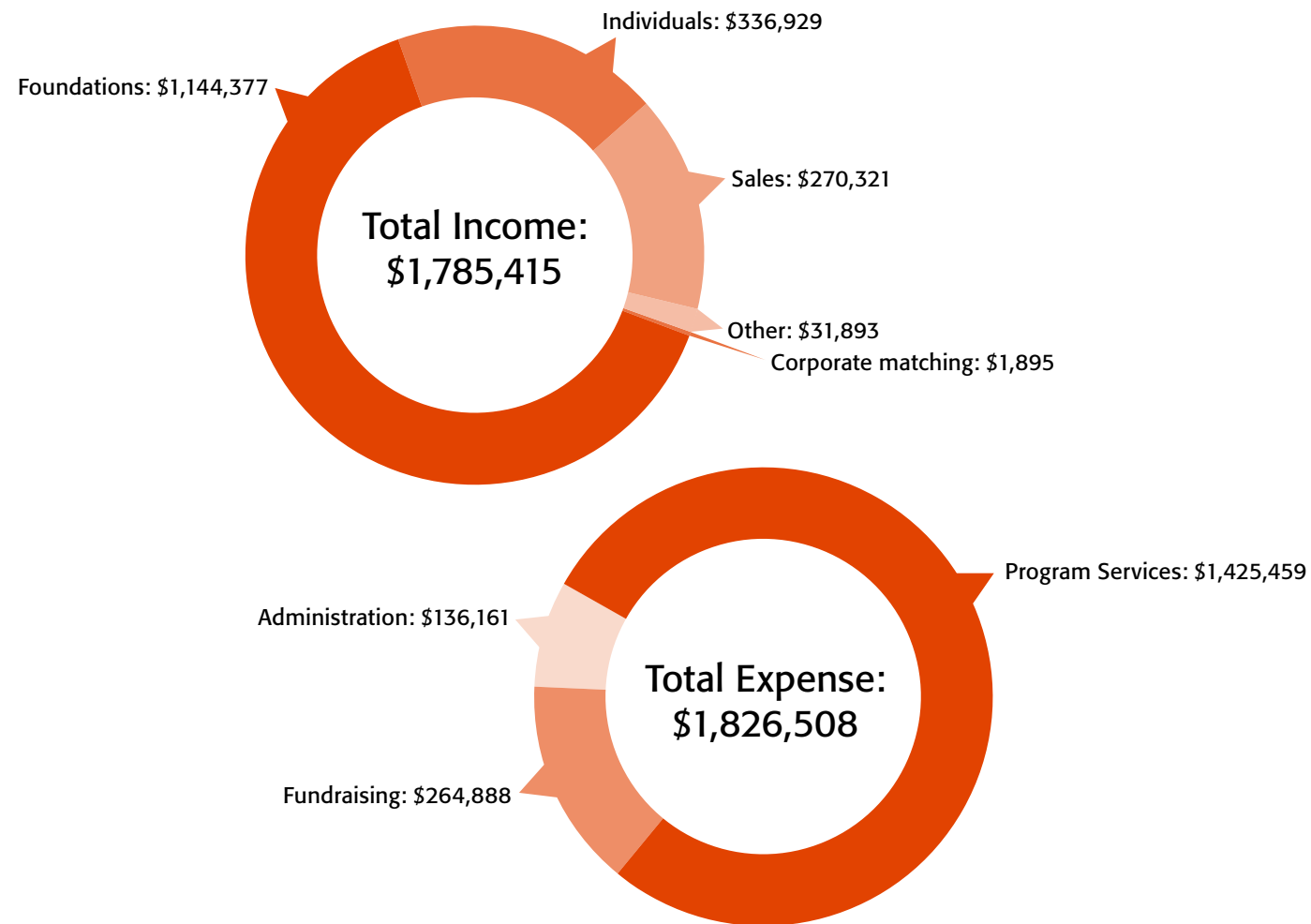
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Financial Activity 2013–2014

Hesperian closed fiscal year 2014 with healthy assets of \$846,806. Individual donations, vital to our financial health, totaled \$336,929 which signifies an increase of 16% over the previous year. Corporations also contributed \$1,895, as matching amounts to the generous gifts made by their employees. Foundation income increased by 41% to \$1,144,377.

In addition, Hesperian received the valuable gift of 9,325 volunteers hours from 171 volunteers working around the world as researchers and reviewers, book packers, field testers, translators, data analysts, and digital coders and programmers.

We thank you all — our donors, volunteers, book buyers and well-wishers — for your invaluable support.



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Hesperian is deeply grateful to the individual and organizational donors whose gifts supported our shared vision of health for all.

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★ = Giving for a decade or more!

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Hesperian's mission is to publish and distribute books and educational materials that help the world's poor take greater control over their health and their lives. Our publications have been translated into more than 80 languages, and are used in 222 countries and territories. A pioneer in community-based health education since the 1960s, Hesperian is world-renowned for writing and illustrating reliable health manuals that enable people with minimal formal education not only to diagnose, treat, and prevent most common health problems, but also organize to change the social causes of poor health.

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To find out more about participating in Hesperian's work:

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