



annual report  
July 2014 - June 2015



much more access, in many more ways

Dear friends,

It's been a busy year for Hesperian. We released two major new books in English—*Health Actions for Women* and *Workers' Guide to Health and Safety*—produced and published two new French editions, and helped partners complete translations into Bengali and Dari. **Hesperian Health Guides are now available in 84 languages—263 titles in all.**

At the same time, an astonishing 4.7 million people, mostly using cell phones and coming from every corner of the globe, found critical health information online in our expanded HealthWiki. And that's not counting the people who used our award-winning mobile app, *Safe Pregnancy and Birth*.

Traditional midwives in Mexico made use of all three pathways. For the last six years, a group of these *parteras* have been attending an annual, four-day training in the small coastal town of Puerto Escondido. They come from marginalized communities all over the state of Oaxaca to learn about safe birth techniques, management of natal emergencies and how to ensure that newborns stay healthy.

We originally sent the conference participants free copies of *A Book for Midwives* in Spanish, which they found invaluable. Then they used a local internet cafe to find more women's health information in the online Spanish version of *Where Women Have No Doctor*.

Later we coordinated their getting low-cost tablets loaded with the Spanish version of *Safe Pregnancy and Birth*. They learned to navigate the app, gave the trainers feedback, then took the tablets home to use in their daily work. These efforts resulted in a vast improvement in the reproductive health of Oaxacan communities, especially in remote locations.

We're proud of how easy we've made it for people to get good health information. But making that easy isn't easy—it takes hard work, and lots of it. **We accomplished everything described in this annual report with a lean, hard-working staff of twenty, our global partners and nearly 12,000 hours donated by devoted volunteers.**

One other component is necessary—you. Your contribution to our work is crucial, because it makes everything else possible. It allows us to deliver practical, often lifesaving information to more and more people, in the languages they speak, in whatever form best suits their needs. We're very grateful for your help doing this, and we'll make sure every dollar you donate counts.

Sincerely,



Sarah Shannon, Executive Director



# online access explodes

PDF files of our books are now available online in 35 languages. More than 110,000 PDFs were downloaded last year, but even that impressive number was far surpassed by the astounding growth of our HealthWiki.

One big advantage of the HealthWiki is that it's always up-to-date (a PDF is only as current as the date it was downloaded from our website). And there are other advantages as well. 62% of HealthWiki visitors use mobile phones or tablets. Outside the US and Europe, it's 75%, and in places like Kenya and Tanzania, it's 92%. HealthWiki material is optimized for viewing on cell phones (it resizes automatically to fit small screens) and it's designed to handle the slow connection speeds of the developing world.

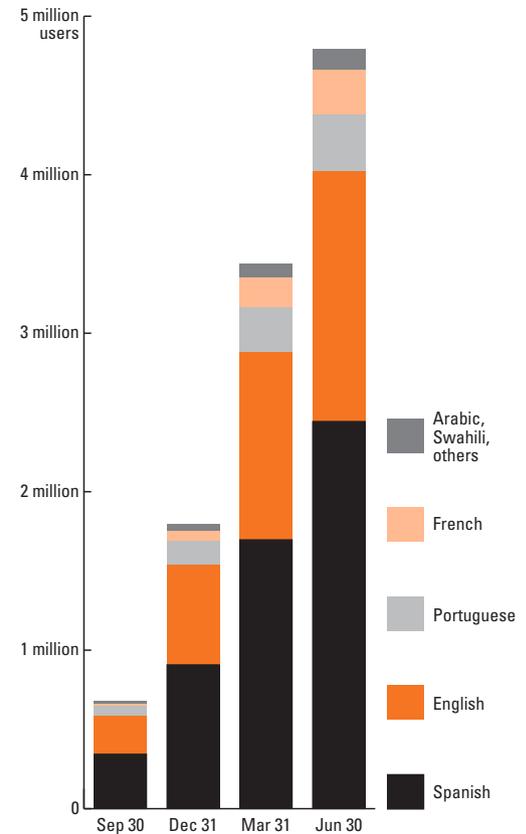
The HealthWiki is also highly searchable. (Try typing something into the search box on the upper right of

our home page—[hesperian.org](http://hesperian.org).)

HealthWiki resources are now available in 13 languages—Arabic, Chinese, English, Filipino, French, Haitian Kreyol, Khmer, Lao, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, Urdu and Vietnamese—and we're working on Amharic and Luo.

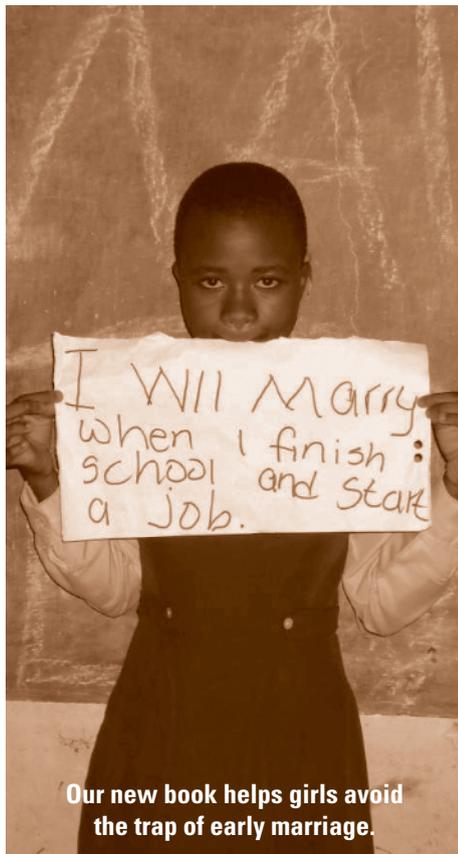
This year 4.7 million people used the HealthWiki, almost four times as many as last year. Studies show that each of those online visitors shared what they found with between 11 and 21 others, which means that our essential health information reached 50 to 100 million people—just from the HealthWiki alone.

The explosive growth of our HealthWiki not only demonstrates the relevance and popularity of our materials, but it also gives us valuable insights into what our audiences are looking for. We use those insights to tailor our content as we move forward.



# two new books

## *Health Actions for Women*



**Our new book helps girls avoid the trap of early marriage.**

GENET

Women's health involves more than just medicine. People working at the grassroots inevitably face social barriers and unexamined practices that have an enormous impact on health. Those problems are the focus of a new Hesperian book.

*Health Actions for Women* shows how women and girls—and men and boys—can educate their communities and mobilize them for women's rights. It offers a wide range of simple activities, innovative strategies and inspiring stories designed to:

- combat violence against women
- improve access to family planning
- make childbirth and motherhood safer
- counteract restrictive gender roles
- promote sexual health
- ensure that health services meet the needs of women and girls

Cecile Richards, the president of Planned Parenthood, calls it: **“A triumph! No other resource today provides such concrete tools for engaging communities and empowering women of all ages.”**

*Health Actions for Women* was field-tested by groups in 23 countries, who shared their experiences and methods. Every activity is clearly explained and engagingly illustrated. Translations into Bangla, Chinese, Khmer, Lao, Nepali and Spanish are in the works.

Last spring, promotional events were hosted by Planned Parenthood Global in New York City; Global Fund for Women in San Francisco; Our Bodies Ourselves, the Harvard School of Public Health and the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights in Boston; Health Alliance International and the University of Washington School of Public Health in Seattle.

## ***Workers' Guide to Health and Safety***

Work is how most of us spend most of our waking hours. But in many factories around the world, workers face conditions that harm their health, endanger their lives and keep them poor.

Despite the huge effect work has on people's lives, too little attention has been paid to the hazards it presents. Our new *Workers' Guide to Health and Safety* is designed to remedy that omission. Rooted in the experiences of factory workers around the world, it focuses on the three most common export industries—electronics, garments and shoes—but its insights and strategies can be applied to any work environment.

Topics covered include electrical, mechanical and chemical dangers, shop-floor first aid, ergonomics and fire safety, as well as social hazards

such as low wages, long hours, sexual harassment, abuse of migrant workers and workplace violence. Its clear, accessible prose puts this invaluable information directly into the hands of those who need it most—the workers themselves.

Of the 90,000 chemicals in common use today, only a few thousand have been studied for any health effects at all. The *Workers' Guide* details what is known about a hundred of the most common ones, and includes an index of hundreds of other names by which they're known. Another appendix covers international labor law.

More than 350 experts and 40 partner groups in 25 countries contributed their knowledge and expertise to the book. We're also thankful to the many individuals and foundations who supported its

development, including David Egilman and his family, who donated “in honor of all the workers who were injured or killed in the course of enriching others.”



# our partners around the world

## Hesperian and the Peace Corps

What for over forty years has been a very fruitful partnership was finally made official. On November 24th, 2014, Hesperian and the Peace Corps signed a memorandum of understanding in Washington, DC. The agreement expands the Peace Corps' use of Hesperian resources and supports enhanced field-testing and review of them by Peace Corps volunteers and their host communities.



“People came looking for help day or night,” says Jersey Garcia, who served in Honduras from 1998 to 2000. “I felt like a superhero and my cape was *Where There Is No Doctor*.”

“Not only are we using the materials,” said current Peace Corps director Carrie Hessler-Radelet, “but we’re going to help refine them in the field, and get them translated into new languages. We’ll not only benefit from using these materials but will also help improve and disseminate them.”

During the signing ceremony, returned Peace Corps volunteers shared stories of using Hesperian books during their years of service. Hessler-Radelet, who served in Samoa, was among them: “I’ll never forget the day I found my host mother weeping because she’d found out that she was pregnant with her ninth child. I went straight to my copy of *Where There Is No Doctor* and read the sections on prenatal and postnatal care, nutrition, and safe labor and delivery. Armed with that information, I convinced her to let me take her to a health center

when it was time to deliver the baby. Moments after giving birth, she had a hemorrhage and would have died if she hadn’t been at the health center. *Where There Is No Doctor* started the chain of events that saved her life.”

As our executive director Sarah Shannon put it, “it’s clear that Hesperian and Peace Corps have much to offer each other. It’s a logical and natural partnership. We’re proud to be able to support Peace Corps volunteers with our resources on many different topics, in many different formats, in many different languages.”

Thanks to everyone who was able to attend the signing ceremony and the reception that followed, hosted by the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, DC.

## Feed the Children

Hesperian has been collaborating with Feed the Children, which works on hunger issues internationally. Since we're known for our ability to produce beautifully illustrated, simple and accessible materials, Feed the Children asked us to help create a curriculum on urban poverty, sanitation and health for use in a neighborhood of Nairobi called Kibera—the largest urban slum in Africa. Each of the six modules includes a structured lesson plan for trainers and a flip chart with large pictures, aimed at people who are illiterate or don't read well. Hesperian created new illustrations and designed easy-to-use lesson plans and discussion-generating flip charts. Feed the Children has been field-testing the materials and is pleased with the excitement the program is creating in the community.

## Libraries in Colombia

We also collaborated with the National Library of Colombia in a pilot project to teach librarians how to make the best use of Hesperian's books and HealthWiki. In the process, the librarians involved found themselves turning into community health promoters!



Wilder Ríos works in Marsella, an old colonial town in the coffee-growing region. To help community members find the HealthWiki on their cell phones or at internet cafes, he created and distributes bookmarks with the web address on them, as well as information about other community health resources.

Ayda Moncayo works in the rural mountain town of Villanueva, cradle of the Vallanato music tradition.



Unreliable internet service and malfunctioning computers couldn't stop her from getting her community the health information it needed. Rather than relying solely on digital resources, Ayda and the library patrons made copies of our books; prominently displayed in the library, they're heavily used. Ayda went on to organize talks on pressing health issues by staff from a nearby clinic.

# helping children

## In communities with HIV



Joop Rubens for Firelight Foundation

Because HIV kills many mothers, men often end up as the sole caregivers of young children.

The latest book in our Early Assistance series, *Helping Children Live with HIV*, is designed to offer practical medical and psychosocial advice to caregivers of young children affected by HIV. Field-testing of five sections—childhood development, communicating with children, HIV testing, medicines, and keeping children healthy—was completed this year by thirteen organizations in eight countries. Elaine Abrams of Columbia University’s ICAP wrote: “This is wonderful and I want to use it immediately!” Drafts of two new sections—HIV prevention and dealing with death and grief—are currently being field-tested and reviewed in India, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

**Malawi’s Forum for the Development of Youth with Disability (FDYD)** has been a Hesperian partner since 2007, when they helped us develop *A Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities*. Now *Helping Children Live with HIV* dovetails perfectly with their work preventing and treating HIV, and fighting the discrimination and stigma that HIV-affected youth face. FDYD’s groundbreaking programs use economic empowerment, creative expression and advocating for improved HIV counseling in hospital settings. We’re delighted to have such an effective long-term partner field-testing *Helping Children Live with HIV*.

# translations

## New French and Portuguese materials

French is spoken by more than 125 million people in Central and West Africa. We collaborated with local organizations there to translate, design and produce French editions of *Helping Children Who Are Blind* and *Helping Children Who Are Deaf*.

We not only ensured that the French translation was appropriate for Africa but that the sign language reflected the local dialect. Our wonderful partners—Fondation le Tisserin, Light for the World, Coopération Atrichienne and UNICEF Burkina Faso—sent us photos of children signing and we drew our illustrations from them.

These two books join the six chapters of the *New Where There Is No Doctor* in French, among the most popular pages on our HealthWiki. More French titles are coming.

Portuguese is spoken by 230 million people in Brazil, Southern Africa and Portugal. Six chapters of the *New Where There Is No Doctor* were recently translated at the University of Maputo Medical School in Mozambique. Uploaded to our website, they quickly became some of our most widely viewed materials. The Portuguese *Where There Is No Doctor* is used by everyone from the Ministry of Health to local health promoters.

## The earthquakes in Nepal

Because Hesperian's online materials are so accessible, accurate and useful, we're able to respond with lifesaving information when disaster strikes, almost anywhere in the world. A dramatic example was the devastating earthquakes in Nepal that left thousands dead, hundreds of thousands homeless and many more isolated by landslides.

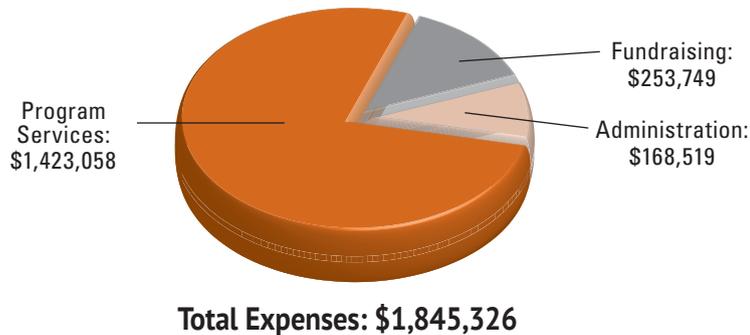
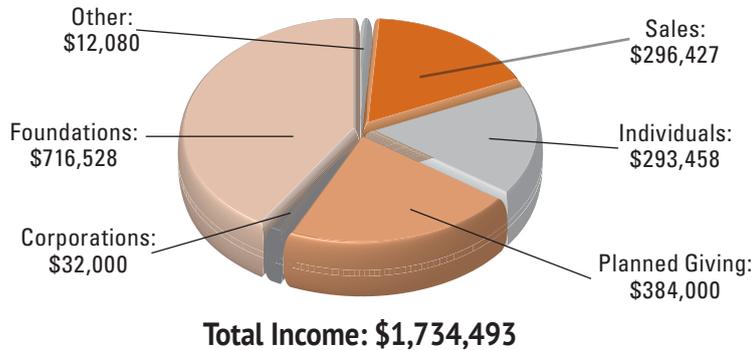
We quickly alerted our e-mail subscribers and several emergency listservs that six Hesperian books were available in Nepali online at no cost. Although Internet connectivity was damaged, some access points were quickly reestablished and relief workers were able to download the books.

Particularly useful was our *Community Guide to Environmental Health*, which has chapters on sanitation, hygiene, water purification and other relevant topics. Printed copies of the Nepali editions of that book and *Where Women Have No Doctor* were also delivered to those who desperately needed them.

The Nepal earthquakes demonstrated not only the value of Hesperian's materials but also how important it is for us to make them available in many languages. We are grateful to our donors for the generous support that makes these translations possible.

# giving and receiving

## Income and expenses



Hesperian closed out several multi-year grants in fiscal year 2015 and ended the year with healthy net assets of \$735,973.

## Why Julie Browne gives to Hesperian

When Julie Browne was in middle school, she saw a slideshow about the work being done in Mexico with *Where There Is No Doctor*. She told her mother, Susan, about the profound impact the presentation had on her, and Susan was so impressed that she volunteered for Hesperian for twenty years!

Thirty years after seeing that slideshow, Julie is still supporting Hesperian's work. When she transitioned from being a medical social worker to starting her own custom clothing and alterations business, Carambolage, she decided to donate 5% of her profits to Hesperian.

"The name of my business, Carambolage, refers to one thing affecting many others, even at a great distance," Julie explains. "If a butterfly beats its wings here, it can produce a reaction on the other side of the world. That's how I feel about Hesperian. The information they provide and the quality of their books really creates change."



## Fundraising house parties

A festive atmosphere belied the serious purpose of house parties for *Health Actions for Women* in Boston, Seattle and Austin. With a dollar-for-dollar match on the table, supporters raised close to \$10,000 to help Hesperian begin translating this important new release into Spanish. “Such wonderful enthusiasm for this book!” said executive director Sarah Shannon. “We’re now much closer to our total goal of \$70,000.”

Our heartfelt thanks to the hosts:

- Boston: Vilunya Diskin and M. Brinton Lykes
- Seattle: Julie Howell, Jared Smith and Karen Daubert, Betsy and Tony Hale
- Austin: Lisa and Libby Doggett

And special thanks to co-author Melissa Smith for her participation.

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★ = Giving for a decade or more!

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## Workplace giving

If your employer has a matching gifts program, you can double, or even triple, your donation to Hesperian. It's as simple as filling out a form. Some companies offer a workplace giving program. If Hesperian is not on the list of eligible recipients, you can usually request that we be added.

## Monthly donations

We'd love it if you'd become a Sustaining Member. Each month an amount you choose will be automatically billed to your credit card, and you can cancel this arrangement whenever you want. This not only provides us with uninterrupted support, but it greatly reduces our fundraising costs.

## Buy books directly from us

Your direct purchases from us at: [store.hesperian.org](http://store.hesperian.org) maximize our revenues and keep our books in print.

## Start your own campaign

Are you participating in a marathon, road race, bike race or swim-a-thon? Make Hesperian your charity of choice. Or sponsor your own event—a house party, a community yard sale, a wine tasting or whatever. (For help planning any of these activities, contact Sherry Nadworny at 510 845 1447 or [sherry@hesperian.org](mailto:sherry@hesperian.org).)

## Our free book program

The letters are handwritten, the stamps exotic and the requests compelling. Every day Hesperian receives letters from people all over the world requesting free books. “Each letter demonstrates a critical need and tells a powerful story,” says Lee Gallery, longtime volunteer coordinator of our Free Book Program. “Each letter reminds me of how most of the world lives and how fortunate we are. Sending a Hesperian book really

empowers and changes lives.”

We’re committed to sending books to those who need them, regardless of ability to pay. But international shipping costs continue to increase—they are now equal to the cost of a book! So raising funds is vital.

Last year three fundraising matches brought in close to \$20,000. With other contributions, we were able to send almost 1,200 books to individuals and clinics worldwide. Please join us in supporting this vital program.



Your donations sent these books to Chazuta, Peru.

## Wills and living trusts

This past year, Hesperian received two major bequests from individuals who wanted their legacy to live on after they were gone.

**Betsy Moore Fleet** cared deeply about children, helping untold numbers to receive adequate education in the area where she lived. A gift from her estate reflects her caring in a major way by providing Hesperian with \$300,000 to support our work with vulnerable children.

**Del Anderson** was a long-time fan of our books who published a newsletter of community development ideas inspired by Hesperian’s materials. In his will he left us \$120,000 to continue our good work.

If these wonderful examples inspire you, contact Sherry Nadworny at 510 845 1447 or [sherry@hesperian.org](mailto:sherry@hesperian.org) for sample wording to include in your will.

## About Hesperian

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 to organize to change the social causes of poor health.

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