



Annual Report
July 2020–June 2021



Dear friends,

This annual report focuses on Hesperian’s work through an appreciation of our partners and the results of our work together. We hope it conveys how international health work is most valuable and most effective when it generates multiple, respectful, many-sided collaborations.

Hesperian extended and deepened connections in Latin America to now work with people in 14 countries. We developed and built new partnerships all over Africa. Our patient multilingual partners in West Africa spoke with us in French, and in East Africa and the Horn of Africa in English, because while we share a fierce commitment to health, we do not share first languages. Look at the calendars of Hesperian staff and you’ll find frequent calls before sunrise and late at night to catch up and coordinate with partners across the globe. The dedication, creativity and optimism shared in these online meetings inspired mutual support and solidarity, and have resulted in dozens of new language editions of apps, books and online resources.

We also found new ways to share reproductive health information through social media, engaging with partner organizations in joint campaigns that reached millions of people in the US and around the world. We are profoundly dismayed by the

criminalization of reproductive health and the denial of women’s rights from Afghanistan to Texas. In this annual report you will read about how we used social media to support struggles to achieve those rights in Argentina, Mexico and elsewhere. We expect next year’s report to celebrate winning them in Texas and throughout the United States, as well as internationally.

Hesperian gave — and received — hope in a perilously dark year. We forged and took shelter in profound and vibrant relationships that prove none of us have to struggle alone. While the pandemic ravaged many of our communities and remains a potent threat in much of the world, it also created opportunities for building more meaningful and more collaborative partnerships than ever before.

We count you, the person reading this report, among our most valued partners. Your support of our common vision makes all of this possible. Please contact us to find ways we can make the most of our work together.

Warmly,

Sarah Shannon
Executive Director
Hesperian Health Guides



Hesperian's Partners during 2020–2021

These exemplary organizations collaborated in developing, translating, adapting and distributing our publications.

Access Uganda
Acción Joven
African Network for Care of Children affected by HIV/AIDS (ANECCA)
African Palliative Care Association
African Youth Advocacy Network (AYAN-Kenya)
ALAMES
American Cancer Society BEACON Initiative
Asociación Alas de Guatemala
Asociación Popular Campesina de Desarrollo—Sierra
Asociación Pro Bienestar de la Familia de Guatemala
Association for Community Development
Atzin
Booknet Magazine Library
Bookshare
Catholic Relief Services
Causa Justa
Center for Development and Integration (CDI)
Center for Health, Human Rights and Development
Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES)
Centro de Reflexión y Acción Laboral (CEREAL)
Chetana
Chikkwawa Ministry
ChildFund, Kenya
Christian Veterinary Mission
CLACAI
Clinica de Familia la Romana
COBIHESA
Colectivo anónimo (Guatemala)
Colectivo anónimo (Honduras)
Community Health Rights Network (COHERINET)
Comprehensive Rural Health Project (CRHP), Jamkhed
Concern America
Consejería pre y post aborto de la asamblea de Villa Urquiza
Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA)
Doctors for Global Health
Educación Popular en Salud (EPES)
ENE EMPOWER
Estamos
Ethiopia & Eritrea Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
Ethiopian Public Health Association
Family AIDS Caring Trust
Find My Method (FMM)
Fishers Union
Fondation Le Tisserin
Fondo María

Deepening relationships and solidarity

There's no denying that the past year has been difficult. The COVID-19 pandemic kept Hesperian staff and many of our partners isolated at home, often staring at computer and phone screens. But then, paradoxically, something transformative happened: despite our narrowed worlds, connections among Hesperian and many of our partners deepened and became more productive than ever.

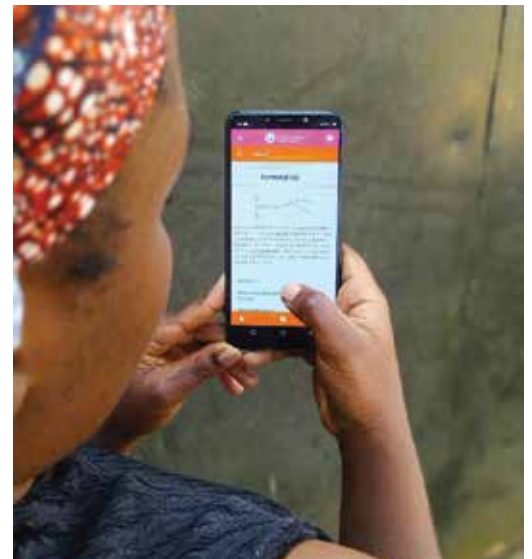
Hesperian's most engaged partnerships this year revolved around reproductive health, resulting in vastly expanded access to our phone apps. As the pandemic shut down clinics, many partners realized how our reproductive health apps could help them support access to care when in-person services were unavailable or limited. As experience using them spread, the apps were translated into more languages and attracted more users.

Health Development and Performance (HDP) of Rwanda translated our *Family Planning* and *Safe Abortion* apps into Kinyarwanda. Their expertise transformed the apps into culturally and linguistically appropriate tools to support health workers in offering youth-friendly approaches to reproductive health for adolescents — a group almost completely cut off from services due to the pandemic.

We also began working with Ipas, Ethiopia to create Amharic and Afaan Oromoo versions of the *Family Planning* app to be introduced and tested by Health Extension Workers of Ethiopia's Ministry of Health as a way to extend the delivery of contraception counseling and services.

Our partner Innovations for Development (I4Dev) in Uganda enthusiastically integrated the apps into their work, taking advantage of the new Luganda versions. One of their peer promoters described their impact:

"I4DEV people introduced the apps to our leaders who asked us to download and try them. I realized the Hesperian app made it easy for me to find all I needed to know, and I have referred my friends to seek clarity themselves. Demystifying myths and misconceptions about family planning is much easier by using the FAQs tab. Previously, I referred to Google which is unreliable since the internet is full of mixed-up information from unfiltered sources.



"Uganda has strict laws against abortion, yet maternal deaths directly related to unsafe abortion stand at 8%. I have reached out to over 10 health workers with this *Safe Abortion* app to help them update their knowledge and how they can help. The Luganda translation makes it easier to understand for people not conversant with English, especially in my region."

During the year, Hesperian's phone apps supported more than 100,000 users in 194 countries and territories. And behind those numbers are dozens of people in organizations with whom we have deepened relationships of friendship, solidarity, and common purpose.

When messages reach millions



When face-to-face communication becomes impossible, go digital! Working together with partners in Argentina, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Mexico, Uganda and elsewhere, we kindled an explosion in social media activity to promote reproductive rights as well as access to Hesperian's *Safe Abortion* and *Family Planning* phone apps in Spanish, English and French. Listening to these partners to better tailor information to local, country-specific conditions and events, we reached over 50 million people in Latin America, and almost 70 million worldwide. Almost 50% were under 24 years old—a traditionally hard-to-reach demographic.

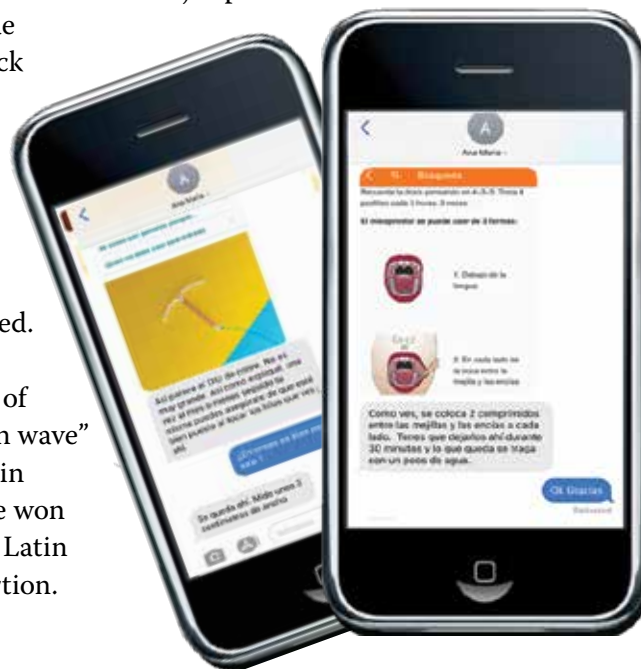
These incredible results are due to Hesperian's commitment to track and support social and political events through partnerships. We jointly developed messages containing local slogans and memes that could be reposted by partners, as well as directly sharing messages partners produced. This coordinated communication strategy supported a diverse array of organizations as they built a "green wave" of feminist-led activism across Latin America. Reproductive rights were won in Argentina, the 5th (and largest) Latin American country to legalize abortion.

Significant gains were achieved by state-level and national activists in Mexico, including Fondo María; and progress was made by Causa Justa and others to broaden legalization in Colombia.

Even where reproductive health rights and services are greatly restricted, such as Honduras and Guatemala, young people especially are organizing to ensure access, using tools like our apps. Young Guatemalan peer promoters, shifting from in-person work to contact through texting and social media, told us they needed a better way for our apps to share graphics. Feedback like this led us to create a feature enabling the seamless sharing of graphics to all texting platforms.

Besides our hyper-local work, we collaborated on global and regional social media campaigns on reproductive health with Women First Digital, Ipas, safe2choose, and Find My Method.

Our social media outreach strategy, based on listening to and learning from our partners, continues as we expand our support of reproductive health in more countries. Follow us: @HesperianAppsEN (or @HesperianAppsES for Spanish and @HesperianAppsFR in French) on all the major platforms.



- Forum for the Development of Youth with Disability (FDYD)
- Fundación Huésped
- Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar (MEXFAM)
- Fundación Oriéntame
- Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)
- Global Strategies for HIV Prevention
- God for People Relief and Development Organization (GPRDO)
- Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK)
- Goodwin Simon Strategic Research GRPDO
- Grupo de Estudios Sobre la Mujer "Rosario Castellanos" A.C.
- Health Development and Performance (HDP)
- HELP Resources
- Hydrabad Book Trust
- ICAP
- Initiative for Integrated Community Welfare in Nigeria (IICWIN)
- Innovations 4 Development (I4Dev)
- International League Against Epilepsy
- Ipas (CAM, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mexico, US)
- IPPF-WHR
- Isibindi
- Kabangwe Creative Initiative
- Korean National Rehabilitation Center
- Kuza Livelihood Improvement Projects (KULIP)
- Latino Health Access
- Life Concern
- Light for the World
- Little Elephant Training Centre for Early Education
- Local Solutions
- Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (MGIMS)
- Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network
- Marie Stopes International (Tanzania, Mexico)
- Médecins du Monde
- Medical Doctors for Choice
- Medical Students for Choice (MSFC)
- Midwives Alliance of North America
- Midwives for Haiti
- Ministry of Information and Culture, Laos
- mothers2mothers
- Mulumbo
- Naripokkho
- National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)
- Northern California Peace Corps Association
- Northwest Regional Primary Care Association
- Oasis Initiative
- Occupational Health and Safety Initiative for Workers and Community
- OPTIO
- Options Recovery Services

PATH
 Pediatric Adolescent Treatment Africa (PATA)
 People's Health Movement - North America
 Peoples Health Movement - Extractive Industries Circle
 Perdhaki
 Perzent Center
 Peten Health
 Plan International
 Planned Parenthood Global (PPG)
 Pro Mujer
 Progressive Care Coalition
 Project Vietnam
 PSI
 Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSI)
 Reise-know-how
 RJSSR Congo
 Rural Health Education Service Trust (RHEST)
 Rwanda Health Initiative for Youth and Women (RHIYW)
 Safe2Choose
 Saglyk
 SantéSexuelle.cd
 Save the Children
 Scientific Technology and Language Institute (STLI)
 SCORE ECD
 Seva Foundation
 Sister AID Liberia
 Socorristas en Red
 Solidarity and Action Against the HIV Epidemic in India (SAATHI)
 Solidarity Center
 Somos Muchas
 Sonke Gender Justice
 Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project
 St Michael's Guatemala Project
 Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA)
 Thandanani
 The Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS (KELIN)
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 Translators Without Borders
 Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health (TICAH)
 UNAFEHB (National Union of Women with Disability)
 UNFPA-Laos
 UNICEF
 Utopia Foundation
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 Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta (YTS)

New topics, innovative approaches

Epilepsy

About 50 million people around the world have epilepsy, including 3.4 million in the US. Many people still don't have access to the medicines that control epilepsy, and the misunderstanding of and stigma against people living with epilepsy and seizures is ongoing.

Health workers are typically good at counseling about medical aspects of epilepsy but usually give less attention to the psychological, social and cultural consequences that cause so much harm. Fear of disclosing epilepsy affects education and employment, and discrimination, violence, and other rights violations remain massively underreported.

Hesperian is building partnerships with people whose work addresses epilepsy and stigma at the community level. Our contacts in Mozambique, Chhattisgarh (India) and here in California so far include people with epilepsy as well as caregivers and others. Their contributions are invaluable as they share the successful work they already do — and what they wish could be done — to improve quality of life. We have also begun networking with the International League Against Epilepsy.

Although epilepsy is a new focus for Hesperian, many of the people we are meeting are familiar with our work

and excited about collaborating on the development of practical, inclusive materials. Our partner in India insisted, "Knowledge is power. If the system isn't looking after its people, people must be able to take care of themselves, making the role Hesperian plays extremely important."

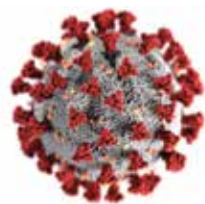
Making climate disasters even worse!

The production of natural gas through fracking was a bad idea to start with, given the enormous amount of pollution it releases and its dire health impacts. But as natural gas becomes less profitable than other forms of energy, the petrochemical industry found a remarkably awful solution: frack gas to make more plastic! This disastrous environmental decision also significantly increases the harms to human health.

Hesperian's new project, Health Effects of Fracking and Plastics, looks at the spectrum of health problems caused by the entire process from drilling and extraction to pipelines and plastics. Hesperian and our partners are collecting materials and sharing information, most recently through a webinar with the Extractive Industries Circle of the People's Health Movement, the Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project, and the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA).

COVID: info superspreader

As COVID-19 continues to affect global health and every aspect of Hesperian's work, we continue to prioritize sharing accurate and multilingual information on vaccines and other aspects.



Global reach of *Workers' Guide*



Now, 6 years after Hesperian's groundbreaking *Workers' Guide to Health and Safety* was released in English, the book continues to support workers' health in new languages

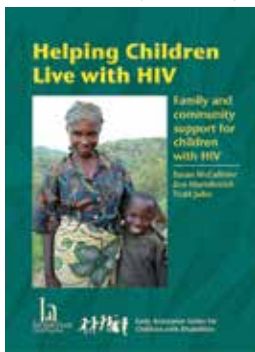
and new formats. A collaboration among Hesperian, the Solidarity Center and the Center for Development and Integration (CDI) led to the complete book in Vietnamese being published and available online. Partners are circulating Chinese-language chapters online and as pamphlets, despite the crackdown on worker organizing in China and Hong Kong. In Indonesia, Yayasan Tambuhak

Sinta published and distributed the sections of the book relevant to electronics factory workers, while Centro de Reflexión y Acción Laboral (CEREAL) in Mexico is using the Spanish version of these sections in their organizing campaigns.

New and exciting activity continues from our 5-year partnership with the Occupational Health and Safety Initiative for Workers and Community in Bangladesh. The Initiative resulted in the training of 88 "master trainers" and the subsequent training of over 6,450 workers and community members. This unprecedented grassroots-focused initiative of women's, labor and health NGOs is now working independently to further extend health and safety training into and beyond the garment industry.

Helping children with Gratis books

Hesperian's Gratis Books program sends free books to health workers, teachers, community organizers and others who need our books but cannot afford to buy them or pay the high shipping costs.



Thanks to generous donations to the Gratis program, this year we have already distributed over 360 copies of *Helping Children Live with HIV* to organizations in

Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Together these groups help many thousands of families with children affected by HIV. Our practical guide brings together the experience of dozens of organizations and experts to show how families can talk with children

"Thank you! Now we have enough books for our peer educators to plan and lead club sessions in their communities."

ENE EMPOWER, Ghana

about HIV, prevent HIV in mothers and babies, understand dosing and manage daily medicines, care for common health problems in children with HIV, support healthy child development and much more.

Isibindi, a South African partner in the book's development, is using the books to assist outreach workers as they provide therapy and practical assistance to children and families in their homes and neighborhoods. ENE EMPOWER, in Ghana, distributed books to their staff members caring for children orphaned by HIV and to peer educators working with community groups.

Volunteers and Collaborators

We gratefully acknowledge the participation of **114 volunteers and collaborators who donated 5368 hours** to help ensure our materials remain accurate, up-to-date, accessible, relevant, and shared most widely.

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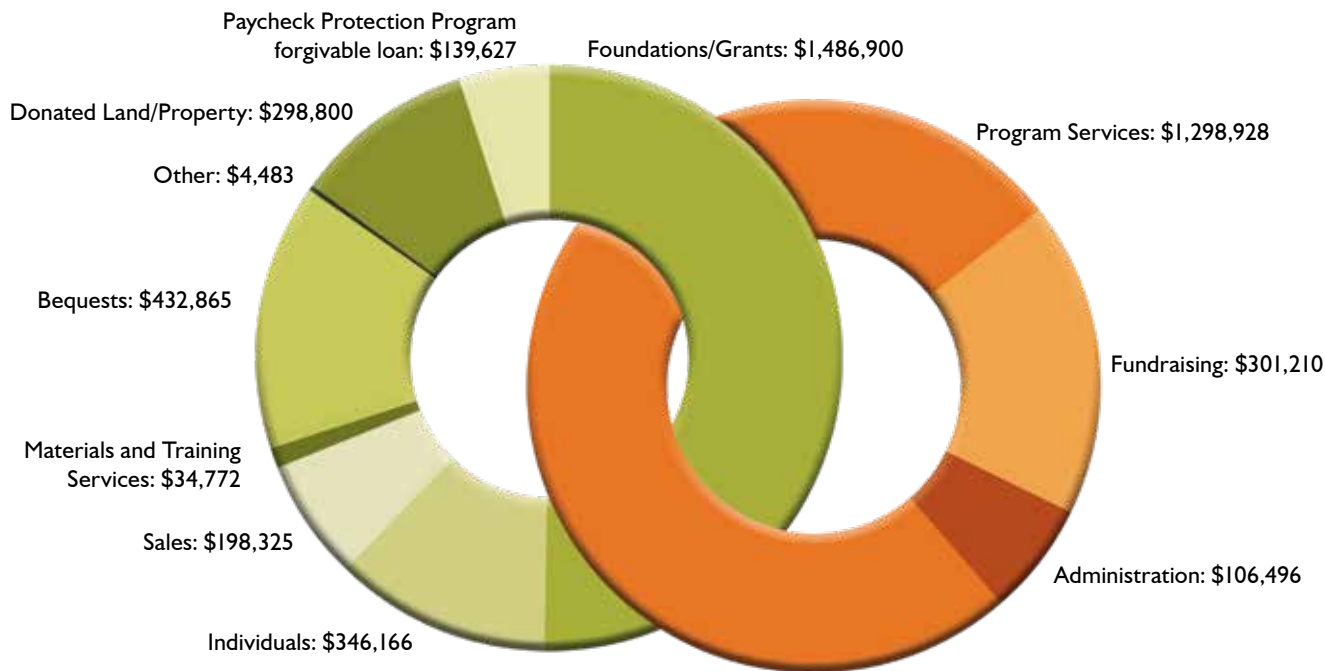
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Total Income:
\$2,941,938

Total Expenses:
\$1,706,634



Hesperian's Board of Directors has created a short-term \$1.76 million Reserve Fund from bequests to ensure Hesperian's mission, programmatic achievements and long-term stability.



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About Hesperian

Hesperian Health Guides addresses urgent, emerging, and primary health needs, structural inequalities, and their root causes by working together with the people most directly affected. Our information and educational resources help people around the world take greater control over their health and lives. Our goal is to create a world with Health for All, Now!

Support our work.

Contact: giving@hesperian.org

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Why we give



Michael Scott & Joy Clendenning
Monthly donors since 2016

As long-time activists in education justice, we know how important regular monthly donations are in providing funds an organization can count on. For Hesperian, this means promoting health justice, providing health information used by grassroots groups worldwide and keeping it updated. Personally, it also feels good—with all the problems in the world, each month we can help out in this steady way. We tell other people: even if a small amount every month, consistent support makes a huge difference.

We grow more impressed with Hesperian over the years—they do so much with so little! Hesperian effectively reaches the community level and helps lift up those voices.

The dedicated folks at Hesperian listen carefully to hear what people say and what they need. We admired how quickly Sarah and her team pivoted to develop digital resources early on and then created apps just as cell phones transformed communications all over the world. The team at Hesperian stays on top of the science and then distills that into accessible language and concepts, and then translates it, all while collaborating with so many people.

We believe our monthly contribution makes a difference and allows us to do our part to support global health. In a world where so much is wrong, Hesperian just gets so much right.