

Annual Report July 2019 - June 2020

This was a year divided in two: before the pandemic and during the pandemic.

Food Distribution

EPIC's program partners have always helped people grow more food, not given out food. During the pandemic EPIC was doing both, especially in urban areas. EPIC believes that it is especially important to be in solidarity in times of crisis, and local people said food was their urgent need. This is a summary of EPIC's response March - August:

In poor areas where EPIC works, day laborers and informal venders buy food each day from that day's earnings. If they can't earn, they can't eat →

Local program staff know these people →

These program partners contact EPIC, and also look for local food donations →

EPIC tells its donors about the need →

Donations come in and program partners distributed food

Creciendo Juntos in Colombia, **APRODENI** in El Salvador, **Toliman Family Crisis Center** in Guatemala, and **La Buena Tierra** in Mexico distributed food for program participants and other local families suffering hunger. Epic also assisted in 2 distributions coordinated by other local Guatemalan groups. These 6 organizations provided food for **427 families (2,734 persons)** because families are large). The average cost to EPIC has been **\$10.46 to feed a family for a week**, partially because EPIC's program partners were sometimes able to get some food donated by local farms and other groups. In total, **EPIC was able to provide food for a week to 6,130 persons.**



EPIC's food distributions are very cost effective! Food is bought locally in bulk, repackaged in family-sized portions, and mostly distributed by volunteers. These photos are from 4 programs.



Information and supplies to help prevent Covid-19

EPIC program partners in Guatemala spent the week before the government initiated travel limits, printing and distributing 2,200 flyers on how to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. Educational flyers were distributed in 4 departments (states). Text messages similar to the flyers were also widely sent out by most of the EPIC's Latin American programs. In July and August, instructions for caring for a person at home with Covid were distributed by WhatsApp and with some food distributions.

Also working to prevent Covid's spread, **APRODENI** in El Salvador provided masks, alcohol gel and soap to 3 communities where they work. **Sal and Luz** in Honduras bought masks and gloves for Honduran doctors working in a clinic without protective equipment. In Guatemala, just before travel was banded, the **Baja Verapaz Program** gave hand washing instruction and distributed 1,500 bars of soap in 14 villages.

Food Security Means Producing More Food - Now and Long Term

Vegetable Gardens

In addition to distributing food, EPIC's program partners are promoting vegetable gardens. Soacha is a very poor community outside Bogotá, Colombia, where people fleeing violence have settled. Most residents depend on day labor and are food insecure. **Creciendo Juntos** had not worked promoting vegetable gardens before Covid, but they have now started 18 group gardens averaging 9 participants each. The families will be sharing the produce. In addition, 16 families now have their own home gardens.



San Lucas Toliman is another place where EPIC's involvement had not previously included promoting gardens. In the last months, 28 families have started home vegetable gardens. There are also 3 group gardens with a total of 15 families participating.

La Semilla del Progreso in Honduras and the **Baja Verapaz Program** in Guatemala have long successfully promoted vegetable gardens in the 38 communities where the 2 programs are working. In each program, almost all of the participants have home gardens - approximately 300

family gardens. La Semilla del Progreso participants also have 8 communal gardens, each with 15 to 18 members sharing the work and the harvests.

Increasing Sustainable Food Production

Laureano Jacobo of **La Semilla del Progreso** in Honduras says that after each disaster to hit Central America, there have been serious food shortages. He tells people, "Plant, plant, plant - everywhere possible!" La Semilla has made this the focus their work. One way that EPIC's sustainable agriculture programs are increasing food security is by increasing farming's resiliency to climate change. Families are advised to plant both crops that like lots of water, and crops that do well with little. To increase the soil's water holding capacity and fertility, EPIC's programs promote using compost, heavy mulching, planting legumes, and crop rotation.





Water and soil conservation work can be done by farmers while social distancing. In a very draught prone area of Honduras, program participants captured water from two springs and constructed a large water reservoir. It will serve several families, but no more than 5 persons dug at a time. Other participants constructed small irrigation projects or dug conservation ditches on their own farms.

In July, the **Baja Verapaz Program** in Guatemala was able to distribute 13,250 trees for reforestation in 15 communities. The trees were donated to the program by the Guatemalan National Energy Institute (INDE). Because July was in the rainy season, and planting trees on your own farm can certainly be done while social distancing, the trees have now all been planted by the program's participant farmers.



Tree planting is a major program emphasis every year in Baja Verapaz.

BEFORE THE PANDEMIC - EPIC'S WORK, JULY 2019 - FEBRUARY 2020

Before the pandemic the work of program partners in local sustainable agriculture was in full swing - expanding work to new villages and experiencing increases in production. La Semilla del Progreso sent these 2 photos showing their agricultural classes before the pandemic, and classes during the pandemic. Yet work continued using distanced gatherings and cell phones.



Highlights of Pre-Pandemic Work



After the 2018 earthquake, **La Buena Tierra** in Mexico began the **Huategalco Preschool and Kindergarten** for the children of farm workers who were taken to the fields because there was no alternative for parents. This year the small school with all-day classes and a vivacious teacher was able to move into a much more suitable location and acquire some second-hand play area equipment.

On January 1, the **Axochiapan Sustainable Agriculture Program** in Mexico engaged in a participatory evaluation of its first 2 years of work in sustainable agriculture. There was strong



affirmation by the program participants for continuation of the work in organic pest control and locally produced fertilizers. The day-long event included great locally produced food and much discussion by participants about what they desired to work on in the future.

The **Baja Verapaz Program** in Guatemala

In Guatemala 2 of 3 children under 5 years suffer from malnutrition, and the situation is worse in the indigenous areas where EPIC works! Using an incubator that holds 250 fertile local eggs, the program provided a new flock of native, locally adapted chicks for many families every 5 weeks. The chicks hatched in 21 days and then were kept in a brooder for 2 weeks and vaccinated before being taken to the villages. The incubator was then refilled with another 250 eggs.



In Guatemala, **Goals for Kids** finished a successful year of soccer, volleyball, basketball, and baseball with 75 teens from 12 to 18 years old participating. The program is providing an alternative to the temptation to join a gang or to attempt the very dangerous trip “North”. At the end of the school year (November in Guatemala), they celebrated a field day with soccer, fun competitions, a picnic and motivational talks. To get a feel of the event and the program [link here](#)



La Semilla del Progreso in Honduras began an agro-salud program (agriculturally based health education) for groups of women in 3 communities. Activities are emphasizing nutrition education and home gardens and there are 50 families participating. The cooking classes use the nutritious food the women are growing, with food preparation safety and family hygiene included. In the photo, *chipilín* a native green grown in the group’s garden, is being made into *tomalitos de chipilín*.

All of this work represents the skills, enthusiasm and commitment of our program partners. However, their potential to transform lives is dependent upon the financial resources available to them. We invite you to consider entering into solidarity with them by giving sacrificially of your financial resources - just as they give sacrificially of their lives in serving others. Please consider sending a check, donating on-line, or becoming a monthly sustaining donor.

Gratefully,

Paul and Mary

<https://epicprojects.org/donate-now/> or

P.O. Box 433, Allenspark CO, 80510

EPIC Program Grants

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Colombia

Creciendo Juntos \$ 4,940.00

El Salvador

APRODEHNI

Responding to Tropical Storm Amanda and Covid \$ 1,555.00

La Segovia Sustainable Food Production \$ 1,015.00

Guatemala

Baja Verapaz Sustainable Agriculture & Primary Health Care \$ 57,597.28

Family Crisis Shelter

Responding to Domestic Violence \$ 600.00

Covid Related Food Aid \$ 2,673.62

ADISA \$ 100.00

FUNDAMARCOS Maya Foundation \$ 1,115.00

Education Regarding Covid - 4 Guatemala Departments \$ 1,414.72

Goals for Kids - Mujeres en Acción \$ 2,480.00

Maya Cultural Center \$ 911.68

Coordination of Program Activities \$ 1,009.80

Honduras

La Semilla del Progreso Agricultural Training Center \$ 37,230.00

Health Education for Youth \$ 6,367.39

Sal y Luz \$ 300.00

Mexico

Fundación Sergio Méndez Arceo - Human Rights \$ 3,989.00

Fundación Sergio Méndez Arceo - Axiochiapan Sustainable Agriculture \$ 8,686.03

La Buena Tierra Preschool and Primary School \$ 2,113.43

Centro Guadalupano Christo Rey \$ 967.47

Nepal

Friends of Nepal Pariwar \$ 500.00

USA

Kauffman Museum \$ 100.00

Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice \$ 100.00

Soila Luna of Fundación Sergio Méndez Arceo, Mexico - US \$ 2,573.79

The Land Institute \$ 100.00

Program supervision in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Colombia \$ 7,500.00

Program supervision in Guatemala \$ 7,242.59

Executive Director's program travel \$ 1,150.56

TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURES \$ 154,332.36

EPIC'S Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020

INCOME

Individuals	\$ 155,266.43
Corporate and Businesses	\$ 5,572.91
Businesses - about 20%	
Churches & Religions Organization - about 80%	
Foundations and Trusts	\$ 10,066.49
Investments	\$ 14,508.95
Legacies and Bequests*	\$ 208,975.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 394,389.78

IN-KIND GIFTS AND VOLUNTEER LABOR

\$ 88,268.00

The majority of this is additional program support.

EXPENDITURES

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

\$ 154,332.36

OPERATING EXPENSES

Administrative Expenses	\$ 19,893.07
Fundraising	\$ 5,118.70
Employees' Compensation	\$ 49,730.51

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

\$ 229,074.64

PPP PAYROLL LOAN - received and spent

\$ 18,300.00

* David Smith's Bequest of \$208,975 will be used over several years, so EPIC's income 2019-20 without this bequest would be **\$185,414.78.**

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