



2021 ANNUAL YEAR IN REVIEW

PO BOX 959 CHESTERTOWN MD 21620

December 2021, ISSUE 14

CoLaborers International assists international indigenous-led community organizations reaching women and children in impoverished communities in Zambia, India, and Costa Rica. Our staff assist through volunteerism, aide, program development, and support. We believe in connecting your field of study to the mission field - giving tangible ways to use what God has put inside of you to help other people and the irreplaceable value of mentorship by indigenous leaders at service sites.

Our theme this year was 'With God all things are possible' **Matthew 19:26**. It's year 2 of the pandemic and many of our staff are going through the same thing globally. God has knit our hearts together in a special way as our teams have been growing and our families. We welcomed 2 new babies born this year - Lwiito and Zara.

INDIA

CoLaborersInternational.com/Projects/India



India has been ravaged by COVID-19 with over 34 million confirmed cases to date. Poverty has increased, and so we have done food outreaches during this time in slum areas to help families.

Schools are online for students. Thanks to donors and churches, we have continued sponsoring children to school and onward to university, even seeing some graduate with their university degree this year. We have some children still in need of sponsorship -

CoLaborersInternational.com/child-sponsorship

Our mobile schools to the slum areas are paused as the pandemic continues. A slum area we work in had a crisis need of a borehole for water which we are able to provide *thanks to donors like you!*



ZAMBIA

CoLaborersInternational.com/Zambia



Sewing skills training at Chisomo Centers in February

with organizations serving the community. See CoLaborersInternational.com/Zambia for info.

CoLaborers Zambia became an official nonprofit in March of this year. We've set up our office spaces and are locally led by Nanyemba, Angel, Chipo, Gomez, and Kelvin to provide assistance to organizations reaching women and children in poor communities. Our **official launch party** will be in March of 2022 on our 1 year anniversary to celebrate and network



We are re-launching our **child sponsorship program** to focus on poor families in rural villages. This is special to our hearts, as our staff Kelvin is from such an area, walking 10km to/from school each day as a child. Our program director, Nanyemba was also a sponsored child when she was small. We personally know the value of child sponsors to change lives. There are 3 terms in the Zambian school calendar and *as little as \$142* can support a child receiving education for an entire year. While these children are often from single parent homes, living in poverty situations or struggling with special education needs - we are inspired by their tenacity, their future dreams, and their hunger for education. Contact Sarah@CoLaborersInternational.com for more information.

Melissa, Hjordis, Chipo, Lauren, and Gabriel (from Zambia's Ministry of Health) worked this year on a **clinical manuscript** of the 6 month study of 200 Zambian clients receiving our drug and alcohol curriculum *Literacy-Free 12 Step Expressive Arts Therapy*. This was recently submitted to a peer reviewed journal and we are awaiting to hear back. We also hope to explore its potential as a school based initiative. *Congratulations to Angel and Kelvin on the birth of little Lwiito this year. Her name means "calling".*

Looking ahead - We hope to restart international internships at the right time and to raise funds for bicycles for children with difficulty getting to school. We plan to do more food distributions as needed.

COSTA RICA

CoLaborersInternational.com/Hynsons



The Hynsons serve in La Carpio, the largest slum in Central America. They work in the worst area of that slum called "Las Gradass" or the "steps". Here Nicaraguan refugee families live. More than 350,000 Nicaraguan refugees live in Costa Rica, which is 80% of the foreign population there. Since 2018, Costa Rica received over 77,000 refugee applications from Nicaraguans fleeing violence and persecution. Few resources are available to shelter and provide food to new asylum seekers. During 2020, 47% of Nicaraguans in Costa Rica were living in poverty and more than 3/4 ate only once a day.

The Hynsons serve alongside a local Costa Rican addictions counselor, Marielos, who started helping these refugees 6 years ago providing mental wellness groups, interactive and creative bible studies, food, hygiene, basic education, arts and crafts activities for the children, as well as vocational training to the parents through her organization "Las Gradass Betel". They have a limited budget and the volunteers all give from their own resources to help. They are so beloved that the community donates what offerings they can of rice, beans, etc... for shared meals, which is incredible considering their own poverty.

We need funds for more educational materials for the children, as well as food. Before we started working alongside them, the children were never fed meat. Now, since we have been assisting them, the children have been excited to have chicken as well as bring on more educational tutors and supplies. Marielos is in the process of building a counseling center. Pray for general safety and well-being. There has been a feud between gangs near the home of one of our team members that has caused quite a few deaths recently. A majority of the kids served also suffer from trauma of sexual abuse and overall poverty.

*Congratulations to Brittany and Frank on the birth of Zara this year.
Her name means "blossom" as a reminder of God's call (Numbers 17).*



Looking ahead - We are establishing a local branch in Costa Rica - *Colaboradores*

Internacionales, led by Frank, Brittany, Marielos, Ana Elena, and Carlos. Melissa and Shelly will be in Costa Rica December to help set this up. *Literacy-Free 12 Step Expressive Arts Therapy* has a Latin American / Spanish language version. We are planning to field test, make adjustments, and do a clinical study for the purposes of helping substance dependent youth and young adults.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIVING!

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GENERAL UPDATES

Kenya - We have been planning with a Kenyan CDC partner organization, Eastern Deanery AIDS Relief Program, to do a future study using the Kenyan version of *Literacy-Free 12 Step Expressive Arts Therapy* with substance using people with HIV. If successful it will become a part of regular programming to help substance users. They have 14 sites in Nairobi providing medical care. Father Rick, John Motoku, Chris, Alice, John Bechtold, Hjordis, and Melissa are working on this project.

US - Online trainings in the US version of *Literacy-Free 12 Step Expressive Arts Therapy* are endorsed for continuing education by MD Board of Professional Counselors & Therapists and we have been able to train people from several different states. CoLaborersInternational.com/ExpressiveArts

NEW 2021 STAFF: *Thank you to Dr. Chris and Dahlia Cunningham who joined us as Spiritual Care Directors. Thank you to Jess Jasitt for her service with special projects!*

Interested in serving, giving, sponsoring, training?

Email Melissa@CoLaborersInternational.com

Check out CoLaborersInternational.com