

...embracing communities

Water
Integration
Education

OVERVIEW—COPING WITH CHANGE

The year started like any other year, but everything changed when the pandemic became a global phenomenon. Restrictions required new strategies to be developed for programs to continue. Change and “pivoting” had advantages such as learning new technical skills and taking new responsibilities for community members. These shifts strengthened leadership and participation. New alliances expanded the scope of programs. And most importantly, lessons were learned in 2020 that can be addressed in 2021.

However, the shift to virtual learning left those with limited or no internet without the ability to participate. This inadequacy of infrastructure and poverty led to inadequate schooling, failing grades or withdrawal from school. It is an issue of concern for our Green Light education program.

I invite you to read further to learn more about the ways in which our programs have met the challenge of 2020.

Thank you for your support,

CAPD Board Members

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On-line planning meeting for Safe Water project.

Program coordinators, Rocio and Ivan, are in the upper left-hand screen.

Safe Water for Families Program

The year started off as usual with FRPG (Fundacion Red Proyecto Gente) conducting a follow-up visit to a project near Cartagena. FRPG followed this by implementation of a small plastic filter project near Viotá, Cundinamarca (see pictures below). Then came the BIG Shut-down! Our own travel plans for 2020 were cancelled and we had to rely on FRPG to represent CAPD.



FRPG and everyone else had to learn new methods, and meetings and training were all migrated to ZOOM or WhatsApp. This presented challenges and a learning curve but after a few months things became more efficient. A benefit of this methodology for training meant that trainers and attendees did not have to allow for travel time or travel costs

and any number of people could attend. Another benefit was the refinement of training materials and presentations. There may be ongoing cost savings based on the lessons learned.

Through various connections and collaborations, FRPG became involved with the Corporate Social Responsibility department of a large cement manufacturer, providing virtual training and on-site follow-up on a small pilot project. The plan is that in 2021 the cement manufacturer will finance a large project. It may or may not include FRPG or CAPD. Either way, many poor needy families will benefit with safe water and that is always GOOD NEWS!.



GREEN LIGHT EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

How did our students fare in 2020?

Most students in Colombia had only one semester in school before having to adjust to new methods of receiving education. Seeing only a quarter of our 402 mostly rural students had internet, the most common method was remote classes facilitated by work guides. Guidance from teachers was variable. Due to the challenges experienced by students, the program requirement of 75% average mark was suspended. Of 402 students 92% were carried to 2021 and 17 (4%) graduated.

What happens to our graduates? Program Impact

The Green Light program started in 2010 with students in primary grades. Since then, 76% graduated from High School, 55% went on to study at university or a technical school, and 45% took courses such as private security. These numbers indicate that the program's objective to raise the level of education in rural communities has been successful. Before starting the program, many students did not finish high school. Motivation to succeed and financial assistance were essential components to success.

What is our long-term goal?



Our long-term goal is sustainability, that is, families being able to attain their dreams through planning and personal action. One family drew a picture of the house they plan to build with funds saved (see picture).

The strategy is to train parents and students in leadership, saving and investing, and entrepreneurship. Investing Hope Foundation, a Colombian charity, assists us by facilitating the creation of savings and entrepreneurship groups.

Twenty savings groups in Santander completed their 2nd year of saving. They report feeling more empowered and have gone from believing that saving was impossible to realizing that they can reach their goals. They now plan to reach even more ambitious goals with re-investment of savings.

Our National Coordinator, Rocio Nuñez, worked hard to strengthen personal identity and leadership. Using the Train the Trainer idea, she developed workshop sessions for Facilitators who will then provide them to parents and students. Facilitators also received training to start new savings and entrepreneurship groups in 2021.

INTEGRATION PROGRAM

FANDIC's 2020 contract with the Bucaramanga Municipal government provided for a comprehensive rehabilitation program for 72 children using educational guides and professional monitoring for therapeutic sessions. They used WhatsApp and telephone to provide 5,069 interdisciplinary therapies over 7 months. Caregivers became the on-site therapists resulting in an increase of family participation and learning. Results showed excellent advancement in the children. The picture shows an example of parent involvement.



Online zoom activities such as dancing, music lessons, and seasonal celebrations like Christmas Novenas, delighted children and youth. Amongst other activities, Fandic provided assistance as needed to the twenty-five children with disability attending school. They created a Women's Self Advocate zoom group. The chocolate sales project found new forms of commercialization; two Fandic mothers attended entrepreneurship classes with the Chamber of Commerce to expand their busi-

nesses; and the supported employment program with Cajasan continued with virtual training sessions.

Earlier in the year, Craig Baskett of Calgary provided a virtual workshop on fostering an inclusive work environment. Workshop participants came from FANDIC's interdisciplinary team and the Disability Network of Santander. Fandic members also took advantage of training workshops provided by other organizations.

Asodispie remained closed for most of the year due to restrictions but re-activated their workshop later in the year to complete the orders made from visits in 2019. Pending in 2021 is construction of a new design for urban settings.

CAPD Mission

The Canadian Association for Participatory Development supports community development initiatives with people disadvantaged by circumstance or disability. Our goal is to promote collective actions that enhance development of knowledge, leadership, and volunteerism leading to enhanced quality of life and dignity, and to provide impoverished people and people with disabilities with the training and assistance needed to improve the quality of their life.

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Acknowledgements

Supporters:

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CAPD Administration

Our Board administers CAPD on a voluntary basis thus keeping our overhead low.

The Board, many of whom are Colombian Canadian, are motivated to contribute to Colombians in a meaningful way.

CAPD Board Members are:
Robert Wiens (Chair and Safe

Water Director), Glenn Van Doorne (Vice President & Secretary), Martha Rojas (Treasurer), Jairo Garzon (Projects Committee), Alfonso Mejia (Marketing Committee), Marlene Wiens (Managing Director, Green Light and Integration Program Supervisor).

**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR
VOLUNTEERS AND
CONTRIBUTORS!**

