



The Sower's Hands

Newsletter by Hope Seeds

A Quarterly Publication For Our Faithful Patrons

Issue 66: **August 2020**

Why Does Hope Seeds Exist?

"I look at it this way, Hope Seeds is the tip of the Sword." - David Balsbaugh, CEO

Have you ever witnessed hunger and hopelessness firsthand? Have you ever heard a mother teach her children to roll over on their bellies and place their fist in their stomach to help ease the pain of hunger so they could sleep? Have you ever seen children rummaging through garbage and waste heaps pushed to the side of dirt roads, where you find pigs, wild dogs, and disease, just to find something to eat? Have you ever observed an elderly person in a remote village so weak from hunger, they were unable to walk to even get water to drink, while only holding a few pumpkin blossoms for food? Have you ever watched children dangerously mine clay, to make mud cookies to sell, just for a few pennies and to offer some relief to other children from the pain of hunger?



Have you ever looked into the eyes of hunger and hopelessness and seen that question that is on the hearts of so many, ***"Why? Why am I hungry - does anyone care?"*** Hunger is destructive and perpetuates hopelessness, destroying families and futures. When you have a clear picture of hunger, it becomes clear why Hope Seeds exists. It is estimated by Oxfam that due to global disruptions from Covid-19, by the end of this year, **60 million people could be added to the 870 million already facing hunger.** That is a large portion of humanity unable to afford enough healthy food to eat.

However, there is Hope, and that Hope needs to be shared! Alleviating hunger through **sustainable food production** begins with a seed. Ending hopelessness begins with placing a seed of hope in the hearts of those looking for answers. Hope Seeds, through science, knowledge, and experience shares ideas and lifesaving seeds along with the Gospel Message of Hope. Hope Seeds is the tip of the sword: by sending seed and the **Message of Hope** we are equipping missionaries to be the first responders around the world, with tools to reach the hungry with the Gospel and love of Christ, often for the first time in their lives. Thank you for being part of Hope Seeds' mission:

Relieving Hunger and Restoring Hope!

Empower ♥ Educate ♥ Encourage



Meet Elioena Aráuz

Elioena Aráuz is the Program Director of **Artists for Soup**, a small nonprofit that works with women and families to increase food security, and much more, in the indigenous region of Corozo, Nicaragua. Artists for Soup is one of Hope Seeds' key partners in this

region. As an agroecologist, Aráuz is one of the few women working as a trainer of other small growers in Central America. She has been instrumental to the process of bringing nutrition gardens and fuel-efficient stoves to the region; an incredibly talented person, she has transformed many lives.

In addition to developing **nutrition gardens**, **school gardens**, and **church gardens** and nurseries around Corozo, Aráuz has been interested in starting other projects that help community members diversify work and economic possibility in the area. For example, in the two years prior to Covid-19, she initiated a project where women gardeners who participate with Artists for Soup learned to make handcrafted dolls to sell (several were given to Hope Seeds as a gift.) During Covid-19, Elioena and this group shifted to using supplies that would ordinarily be used for doll making to make face masks for everyone in the community and for church groups in the nearby city of Matagalpa. Other side projects that Aráuz oversees for gardeners include art workshops, cooking classes, beekeeping, seed saving, nutrition producing nursery development and rural

bakery development. During Covid-19, much of Aráuz' work has been one-on-one with specific families, rather than the larger workshops format that is typical.

Her strong faith is clearly a central connection to people in the region. Aráuz speaks about gardens both in the field and in churches where she is asked to meet with groups or preach. Small growers who work with Aráuz speak of having greater respect in their family, church, and community because their work in the garden is new and everyone can see that it makes the family stronger and healthier. She puts it this way: ***"Before the gardens, you would never have seen a cabbage in the house. Now children are eating peppers and carrots! People are incredibly happy to be able to grow food for their tables."***

Artists for Soup has invested in the demonstration gardens and meeting spaces, making possible workshops that bring together international and local groups. Bringing people together to share science-based information and local knowledge, along with her faith, is what makes Aráuz's approach successful. Hope Seeds will continue to support this great work in the days ahead and plans to work even closer with Artists for Soup, conducting on-the-farm research of better suited varieties of seeds that will adapt to this region.





Onward and Upward - We keep moving forward!!!

Thanks to so many volunteers and the time they have given to Hope Seeds, our new campus is becoming a center of activity to meet needs globally. Pressing on in this new reality, we have implemented new ways of packing and sending seeds, including a home seed packing kit that can be picked up at our office in Bradenton, Florida. These kits are equipped with everything a person, family, or small group would need to put together family pack of seeds or package bulk seeds. We are thankful that we have been able to adapt in order to keep up with the many seed orders from various countries, while also expanding our US outreach to needy families.



Hope Seeds' intern program is being fine-tuned this summer and has already accomplished more than our expectations. Many of Hope Seeds materials that are sent overseas are being updated and redesigned to be more effective for future generations. The experimental gardens are producing new varieties of seeds that will be added to our inventory of **life saving seeds**. Many of our current seeds are being tested for heat

tolerance, while other new varieties are being examined for future consideration.

Hope for Kids Local and Afar

Camp Z, a local kids camp at The Church at Bradenton, reached out to Hope Seeds to take part in a gardening project for the kids this summer so they could learn about hunger and how to grow their own food at home. The children were eager to get started as Hope Seeds Intern gave a brief introduction about Hope Seeds and how we address hunger and share Christ in many countries around the world. After explaining the importance of seeds and instructing on planting techniques, each group started planting their own garden which will be the start of a community garden at the church. The kids were so excited to receive their own **seed growing kits** at the end of the program and show their parents the seeds they were going to plant at home.

We are also proud to have partnered with local artist Lipstick Lex, founder of Kisses for a Cause, by providing **seed growing kits** for the Made With Love Project! In support of struggling families affiliated with



Feeding Tampa Bay, our seeds were 1 key element within these care packages to provide hope, enrichment and joy to families who lost nearly everything due to Covid-19.

In another local outreach, Hope Seeds was privileged to provide **seed growing kits** to Hope4Communities' Days of Hope. These seeds, along with other essential items, were distributed to nearly 3,000 homeless or at risk children and their families.

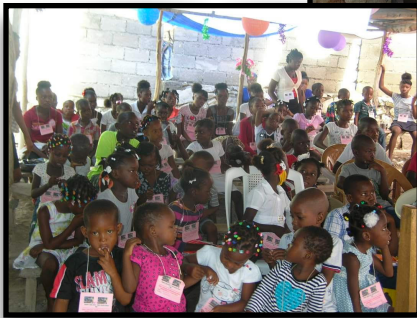


At the same time, in Haiti, the annual Bible Garden School was conducted by Josias Romeus, Agronomist and Hope Seeds Haiti Director. Over 100 children received Bible and gardening lessons in Haiti.

At Hope Seeds we believe that Children are the Hope for the future.



Josias Instructing on Gardening Skills after Bible lessons



2020 Giving Challenge Update

On behalf of everyone at Hope Seeds and all those we serve around the world, Thank You so much for accepting the call to **Be The One** to bring **Hope to the Hungry** by participating in the **2020 Giving Challenge** presented by The Community Foundation of Sarasota County with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation! This year was a huge success! Thanks to your generosity and matching funds, Hope Seeds raised over \$30,000!!! How will these funds be used? We are currently in the process of restocking our shelves with new seed supplies. As transportation resumes across the world, we

need to be ready to answer the call for help to address hunger and the lack of quality seed. One of Hope Seeds goals has always been that no man shall go hungry for the lack of Seed. For example, we just received a letter from a ministry in India, desperate for seed to address starvation due to Covid-19 and we plan to respond. Thank you again for your faithful support and overwhelming response to be part of responding to hunger and changing the world for Christ.

Thank you to the individuals who made these meaningful gifts to Hope Seeds:

In Memory of:

♥ Ruth Grosshans
♥ Rev. Orv Mueller
♥ Ardis & Wilfred Luecht

♥ Mr. Paul Horton
♥ Alex Gish

In Honor of:

♥ Kathy Engelhardt
♥ Victor Engelhardt
♥ Mike & Lorene Zagata
♥ The Balsbaugh Family
♥ Peter MacFarlane
♥ Clyde Kasten
♥ Dennis & Beverly Hemman
♥ Dave & Maxine Balsbaugh
♥ Kristin & John Gilbert
♥ Cyndi & Bob Marquardt

♥ Bruce & Amy Pabst
♥ Megan Balsbaugh
♥ Dave Balsbaugh
♥ Joyce Rupp
♥ Merle Rupp
♥ Bruce Pabst
♥ Karen Pabst
♥ Art Pabst
♥ John Gilbert
♥ David Orr



Hope Seeds, Inc.
Corporate Office
4501 Manatee Avenue West #161
Bradenton, Florida 34209 USA
HopeSeeds.org | 941-228-5660

**Plant A Seed!
Feed A Soul!**



© 2017 Hope Seeds, Inc. All rights reserved.

Hope Seeds Inc is a 501(c) 3 organization and your gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law. #65-0911582

Hope Seeds, Inc. meets all requirements specified by the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act (Registration # CH14975). A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE, OR ONLINE AT www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.