

# Cooperative for Education (CoEd)



Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Guatemala through Education

## 2021 Annual Report

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Textbook Program inaugurations looked a little different in 2021, but thanks to our team's efforts to adapt, we were still able to get these vital resources into students' hands safely. *Chimaltenango, February 2021.*

This past year opened with a cautious optimism. By January 2021, vaccines were rolling out around the world, activities were starting to resume, and we were all more than ready to put the COVID-19 pandemic behind us. Even in Guatemala, the Ministry of Education began to tentatively welcome kids back to school in February 2021—albeit with a blended learning plan. The plan called for reduced class sizes to ensure social distancing, combined with supplemental learning from home. We were all trying our best to settle into a “new normal.” But before long, cases began to rise yet again, especially across Guatemala. Many of the schools served by Cooperative for Education (CoEd) programs soon suspended in-person classes entirely—sometimes with very little notice—sending children back to learning from home.

Despite these unpredictable challenges, CoEd programs continued to run. Even in the middle of a pandemic, we delivered our four tried-and-true programs to new schools and students in 2021:

- We established one new Computer Center for a total of **54 CoEd Computer Centers** throughout Guatemala, which provide 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills to **13,500 students**.
- Five new schools received **CoEd textbooks** in 2021, bringing the program's total annual reach to **22,000 students in 195 schools**.
- We trained our **1,000<sup>th</sup> Spark Reading Program teacher** as one of 161 new teachers in the program in 2021. Together, these teachers are instilling a love of reading and learning in **28,400 young students** every day.
- We brought 255 new students into the Rise Youth Development Program. The program has reached nearly **1,500 Rise Scholars** in 16 communities over the years.

When the pandemic first hit the previous year, we immediately focused on rapid responses—like conducting more than 1,000 calls to Rise students each month and delivering study guides to textbook



and computer teachers. As the pandemic wore on, we gained experience in virtual activities like training seminars for teachers and group WhatsApp calls with students and parents. These experiences provided vital capacity building that would inform further shifts in our programs. As we headed into the second year of the pandemic, we turned our focus to longer-term changes and adaptations for the future. Because the reality throughout 2021 was that our “new normal” wasn’t normal at all—it was constantly changing due to unpredictable levels of COVID spread and accompanying local restrictions.



Students at EFA Cobán recorded a thank-you video to give CoEd supporters a peek inside their new Computer Center, since tour visits weren’t possible. *April 2021.*

### Heeding the Call for Agile Solutions

With constantly shifting circumstances, our team in Guatemala had to be prepared for every possibility. Like a Marvel or DC superhero, we had to don our precognition hats—predicting every eventuality and having a plan in place for it. We focused on developing flexible adaptations for each of our programs that could provide these vital interventions, no matter *what* came next:

- The Textbook Program and the Spark Reading Program launched robust virtual platforms for teacher training. The platforms are loaded with study materials and videos demonstrating program techniques to help teachers work through the entire curriculum independently.
- Computer Centers Program staff developed a virtual platform to deliver the program’s curriculum to *students* and installed the platform at CoEd Computer Centers throughout Guatemala.
- Rise local facilitators guided students through their youth development manuals from home. Videos, group calls, and worksheets took the place of the program’s typical in-person workshops, and students submitted photos of their assignments via WhatsApp.

Thanks to these new platforms, CoEd programs can now be delivered primarily virtually *when needed*. However, when *in-person* activities can take place, the platforms can still give teachers and students the chance to review and engage with the material on their own like never before. This will continue to add value to our programs for many years to come,

even once in-person activities can fully resume. The platforms will also enable our programs to expand to schools we never could have reached before. Smaller schools that can’t afford to hire a dedicated computer teacher may now be able to receive a CoEd lab with a part-time teacher guide to lead students through the virtual platform. We’re also looking at ways to bring Spark platform access to primary-school teachers in regions our Spark Program can’t reach in person—a truly portable version of the curriculum.

### Building our Superhero Squad

Of course, we couldn’t do this amazing work alone! The teachers and students we serve have always been superheroes, but to ensure they could continue working toward their education in the darkest of times, it took an entire team of supporters, partners, and staff with superhuman generosity and devotion to the cause.

The first superheroes to join our team were the Rotarians who immediately noticed the potential of the Textbook Program’s sustainable model—all the way back in 1996—and helped form the Guatemala Literacy Project (GLP) to bring the program to additional schools. In the past 25 years, support from more than 800 Rotary clubs and 99 Rotary districts have made it possible for these programs to reach their current scope. And even during the pandemic, when clubs’ own activities were interrupted, their unfailing generosity to the GLP ensured the programs could continue expanding to new schools and students.

Private and family foundations have also been longtime members of our superhero squad, and immediately donned their mask and cape when the pandemic first hit. Several foundations stepped up to fund pandemic response initiatives, enabling us to build these vital new systems throughout 2021. Our partnership with the Obama Foundation’s Girls Opportunity Alliance even brought a *Hollywood* superhero to our team, when actress Brie Larson (Captain Marvel) shared the story of Rise student Rosa with her 6.8 million Instagram followers to celebrate the International Day of the Girl. (Read the full story at [www.coeduc.org/blog/rosa-walking-the-path-to-a-brighter-future/](http://www.coeduc.org/blog/rosa-walking-the-path-to-a-brighter-future/).)

The latest growth in our superhero squad comes from individual donors and sponsors. In recent years, we've diversified our funding to improve our long-term sustainability as an organization. We're proud to report that this effort has been a remarkable success! This group of superheroes flew in with an unprecedented \$1.3M in 2021 to collectively support the children of Guatemala! THANK YOU to all of you superheroes who stepped up to give so generously of your time and treasure in 2021. Thank you also to all who helped make our new monthly giving program, The Cooperative, successful in 2021! You are providing a base of reliable support to ensure our programs can continue serving the kids of Guatemala—empowering these youth to join the superhero squad themselves one day and lead the way to a brighter future for their entire country.



The families we serve in Guatemala are heroes in their own right, like Rise student Rosa and her mother, who built the family's home with her own two hands. *Cajobal, Sept. 2021.*

## A Super Team Achieves Super Results

Thanks to our agile approach and new innovations, more than 57,000 teachers and students throughout Guatemala were able to continue learning during 2021. In addition to the virtual platforms described above, another new initiative in response to the pandemic was the development of portable reading cards and study guides for Spark students to complete at home (pictured on the cover). Our Spark team distributed 52,000 of these *tarjetones* ("big cards") in 2021, filling rural Guatemalan homes with portable, engaging reading materials

like never before! The cards even contain advice and encouragement for parents—many of whom are illiterate themselves—in how they can support their children's learning at home.

Finally, bringing together all these successes required a superhuman effort from our staff. Our team in Guatemala provided the boots on the ground to develop the virtual platforms described above, while coordinating more closely than ever before with teachers and parents alike to ensure they had the necessary support to continue educating their students. In the U.S., our team led the charge not only in diversifying fundraising, but in putting in place systems improvements to make all of our work—including coordination with the program teams—smoother and more efficient.

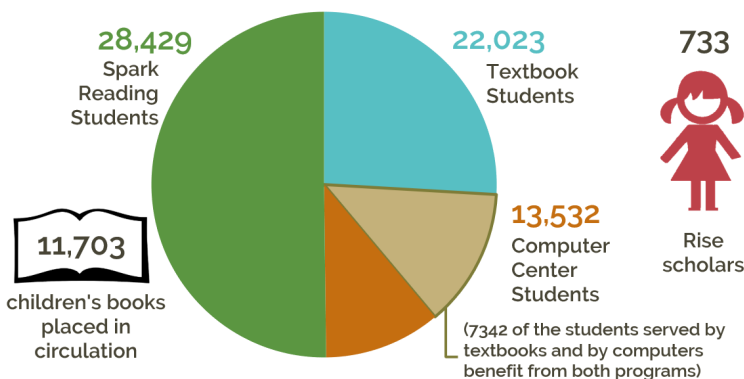
Finally, the Relief Fund launched in response to the pandemic continued to help communities suffering from extraordinary circumstances. CoEd textbook school Campur, in Alta Verapaz, had been regularly renewing their books through the revolving fund since they joined the program in 1999. But when flooding struck in the wakes of Hurricanes Eta and Iota, their supply of textbooks was ruined. The relief fund enabled us to provide them with a new seed donation of books to get them back on track for the 2021 school year. (Read the full story at [www.coeduc.org/blog/help-after-hurricanes/](http://www.coeduc.org/blog/help-after-hurricanes/).)

As one textbook teacher said after participating in virtual training this year:

"CoEd and its programs are like a reliable source of water in the middle of the desert, they are always there for us when we need the most support."

Thank YOU for being a part of this superhero squad as we continue to bring hope for a brighter future to all of Guatemala, even in the darkest of times.

## How Your Support Made a Difference in 2021



Yours in service,

Joe Berninger  
Executive Director

Rony Mejía  
Guatemala  
General Director



## Financial Highlights

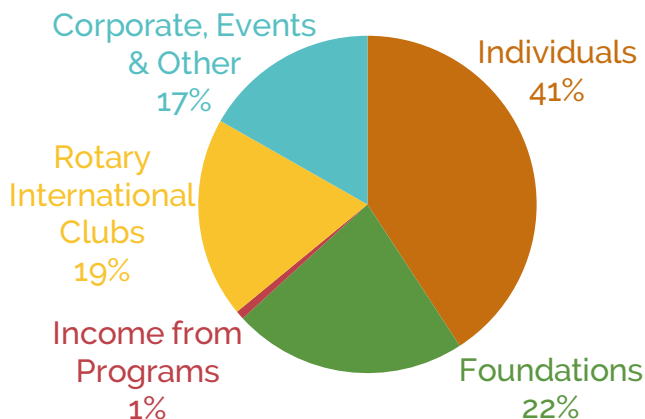
(January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021)

ANNUAL REVENUE 2021	Jan. – Dec. 2020	Jan. – Dec. 2021*
Individuals	\$1,126,872	\$1,304,454
Foundations	\$888,770	\$715,043
Income from Programs	\$138,200	\$26,525
Rotary International Clubs	\$484,464	\$614,259
Corporate, Events & Other	\$473,925	\$535,525
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$3,112,231</b>	<b>\$3,195,806</b>
ANNUAL EXPENSES 2021		
Program Services		
Textbook Cooperatives	\$303,227	\$287,909
Computer Centers	\$244,843	\$267,866
Spark Reading Program	\$438,593	\$445,602
Rise Youth Development Program	\$706,436	\$765,669
Direct Education (Bridges Program)	\$530,740	\$392,663
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$2,223,839</b>	<b>\$2,159,709</b>
Mgmt & General	\$202,354	\$217,263
Fundraising	\$274,139	\$278,648
<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>\$476,493</b>	<b>\$495,911</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,700,332</b>	<b>\$2,655,620</b>
Contribution to Net Income	\$411,899	\$540,186
Total End-of-Year Net Assets	\$3,362,649	\$3,902,835**

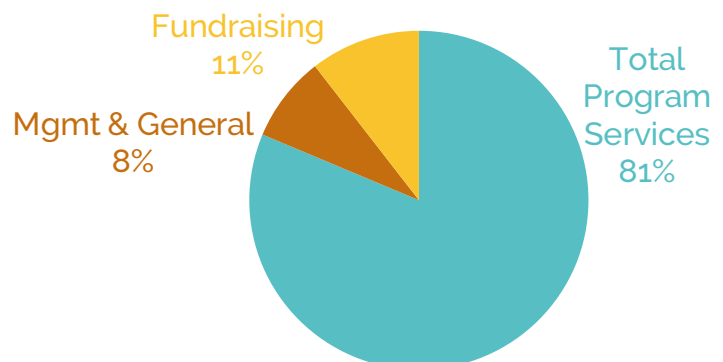
\* These numbers are not yet final, as our annual financial audit is still in process.

\*\*The change in net assets reflects the challenges of balancing income and expense while the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect program activities unpredictably. Increased individual giving from our superhero donors—combined with PPP loan forgiveness—made up for decreases to foundation revenue, and minimal program revenue (due to the lack of project tour income and reduced revolving fund purchases in 2021, offset by a corresponding lack of expenses in both categories). Program expenses were lower than projected as many activities (especially in Spark and Rise) happened virtually at reduced cost. Some corresponding funds will be held for a future year to complete these services (for example, measurable results testing of Spark Program students) as originally planned when circumstances return to normal.

Annual Revenue 2021



Annual Expenses 2021



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\*as of 12/31/21



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(Guatemala Literacy Project)

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