



# HELP BOLIVIA 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

## ABSTRACT

Reporting on 2019 activities supporting children and their families in an impoverished area of Bolivia to improve their health and well-being and to change the cycle of poverty over the long term. Also includes details on fund raising events and social media activities.

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## A Note from the President

This was a seminal year for the Help Bolivia Foundation, 2019 being the year we became licensed under Alberta's Charitable Fundraising Act, registered with CRA enabling us to issue tax receipts, gained a spot on GlobalGiving, and held our first AGM. Our donor pool and overall donations continued to increase, driving us towards our goal of establishing enduring support to indigenous children and their families in the most impoverished country in South America.



Families and children we support are primarily indigenous Aymara people who have relocated from rural areas, face barriers to education, nutrition, and violence free lives; HELP Bolivia provides instruction, nutritious food and counseling through our program in Tahuantinsuyo, a community in District 5 of El Alto. Access to school is limited, impeding literacy, numeracy and school completion. This indigenous population struggles with identity, language and discrimination when seeking access to services or employment. Poverty and malnutrition are pervasive, as is violence in the home. These factors lead to low self-esteem, aggression and employment in sporadic, menial jobs.

Help Bolivia is focusing on creating positive change by delivering education, counselling, and nutrition in this community. We support community health initiatives and provide facilities, staff, materials, and technology to implement this change. In 2019 our programs supported over 60 children and their families, financed by fundraising campaigns, events and the generosity of our donors. There is a waiting list of additional families that need support in the community. We seek to grow our Foundation and help more children access the kind of future we want for our own children. Our vision embodies four pillars: Nutrition and Health, Education Support, Skills Training and Fundraising.

Over the year, we expanded our hot-lunch program, fostered academic growth with learning objectives, materials and staff, counselled and educated children affected by violence and sexual assault. The Foundation applied for and obtained registration with the CRA, and held well-attended Galas in Calgary and Montreal. Further, we generated awareness of our activities in Bolivia, attending various community events and connecting with the local Bolivian ex-pat community. In March, members of the board visited Tahuantinsuyo and met with staff and families of our project to better understand their challenges. The number of donors and the overall value of contributions grew throughout the year and our enrolment in GlobalGiving, with its international reach, gives us hope that this growth will continue.



Beyond fundraising goals for 2020, the Foundation plans to expand its reach through membership of *Coordinadora de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil Canadiense en Bolivia* (COCAB), promoting Canadian organizations in Bolivia, and engaging with *Helping Hands Bolivia* to assist our graduates. We plan to commence sewing and entrepreneurial training programs, the first of many skills we hope to develop. Our current facility is close to capacity, so as we expand, we plan to replicate our program in other sites in El Alto.

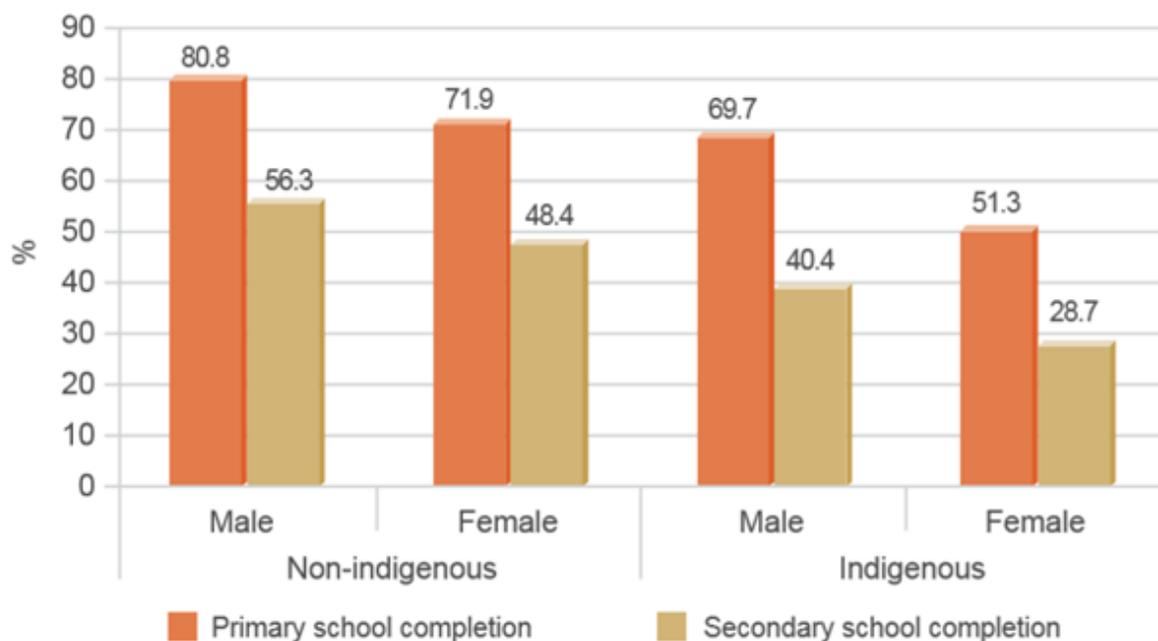
## Bolivia – The Challenge

### Education

The Bolivian education system struggles to meet the needs of a predominately young population due to the substandard quality and underfunding that would allow local actors to make improvements. A lack of infrastructure and educational resources have led to a half-day system that allows for a single building to service double the population. This acts to reduce the quality of education and rates of achievement for at-risk youth. Although most children attend primary school, the majority of these children do not continue to secondary school and, many of those who do, drop-out before graduation. Barriers to completing education include pregnancy, domestic work, joining the labor market, and a lack of economic resources. The average age at which a child leaves school is 14 years old.

### Figure 1. Completion rates in urban Bolivia

*Percentage of male/female population by indigenous status*



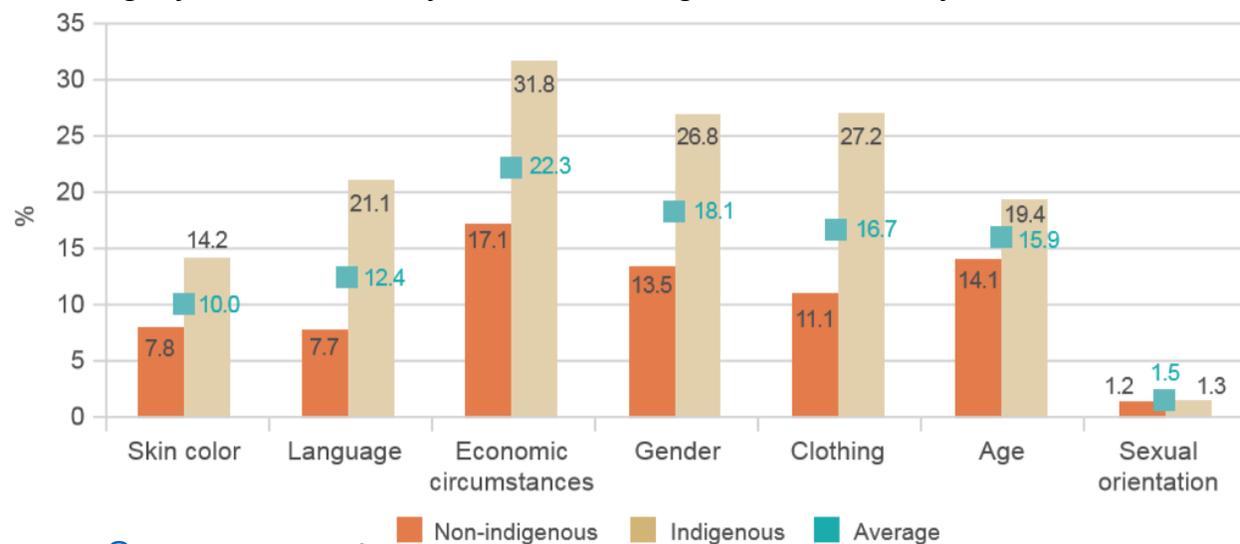
© [International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2015](#)

### Indigenous Identity

Bolivia's cultural identity is strongly shaped by the 88% of the population who identify as indigenous, with most identifying as Mestizo (analogous to Métis), Quechua, and Aymara. Despite the enduring effects of colonization, these groups remain resilient amid the obstacles they continue to encounter. The largest obstacles are the loss of identity, language, and cultural traditions. As well, discrimination continues to deter their economic and social advancement. As a result, indigenous people are disproportionately affected across all dimensions of inequality.

## Figure 2. Discrimination

Percentage of women who have felt discriminated against on the basis of:



While all indigenous groups experience similar challenges, not all groups do so to the same extent. According to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (2015):

There are significant differences in the size of the gender education gap across different indigenous groups and age cohorts. The 2012 Census shows that the **Aymara population has the largest gender gap in literacy, primary school completion, and secondary school completion** (p.8).

## Extreme Poverty and Malnutrition

Despite Bolivia being one of the world's leading producers of highly nutritious quinoa and soybeans, the average Bolivian family cannot afford access to adequate nutrition. This is reflected in a multitude of domains: 16% of Bolivian children show stunted growth from malnutrition, possess the highest rates of infant and maternal mortality in South America, and only rank 165<sup>th</sup> in life expectancy compared to other nations. The underlying cause is extreme poverty, with nearly 40% of Bolivians earning below the extreme poverty line of \$2/day.



## Violence Against Women and Children

Violence is a pervasive threat to women and children in Bolivia. Almost 60% of women and girls will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime and 19.4% of children will undergo child marriage. The high rate of violence against women is sustained, in part, due to the beliefs and values that constitute the *machismo* culture. The *machismo* culture disempowers women's control over their lives and reduces their value, in their home and community, making them dependent on men and subject to violence. With most of this violence occurring within the home, domestic violence and femicide are key issues for Bolivian women and children.

## Rural Migration to the sprawling city of El Alto

The City of El Alto, the second-largest city in Bolivia, is Bolivia's fastest growing city, with migrants moving in from the countryside for better economic opportunities. Situated adjacent to La Paz, El Alto is the highest city in the world, and hosts the highest international airport at 4,100 meters above sea level. Founded in 1903 by the railway, with a population of 11,000 by the 1950s, El Alto reached City status in 1987. The majority (76%) of the citizens are Aymara, and it is expected that the population will be at or above 1 million at the next census, well over the population of La Paz.

Help Bolivia Foundation is currently working in the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre, located in the Tahuantinsuyo neighbourhood within District 5. In this gritty and impoverished neighbourhood, children are at risk of gangs and abuse. Our programs support families who migrated to the city to give their children a better life; most are illiterate, having received little education themselves.

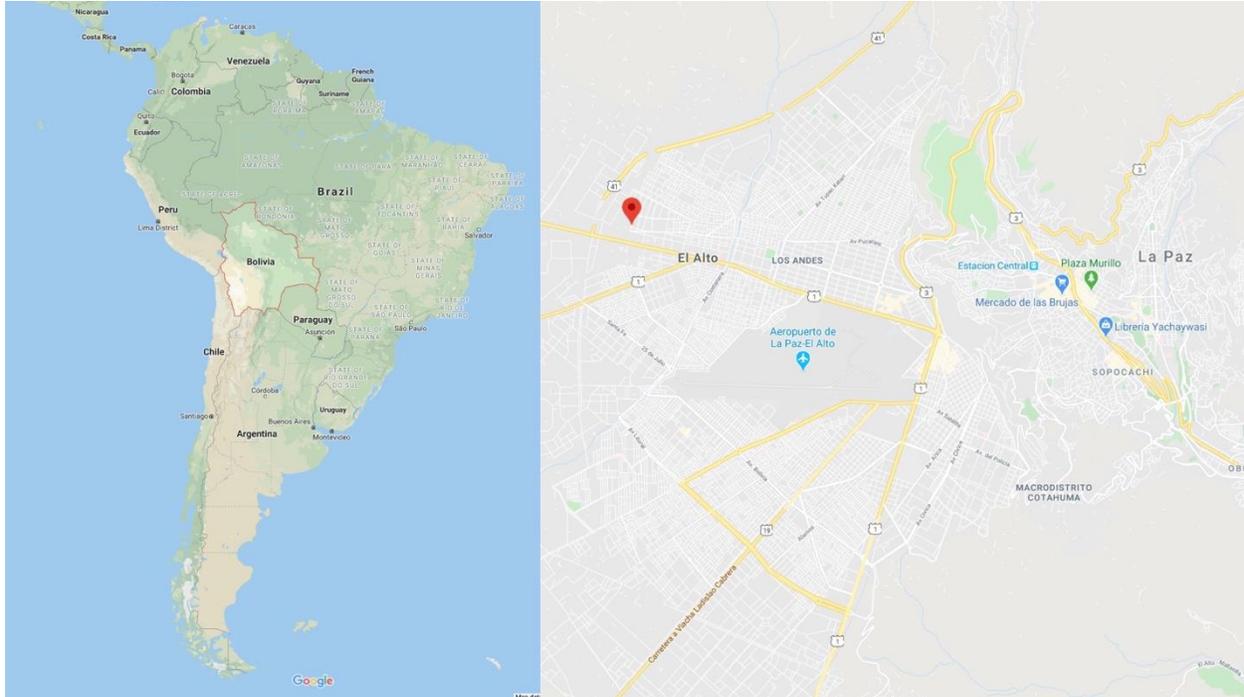


Figure 1 - Bolivia and Community Centre Location

Our families live in small one or two room homes, in gated compounds, paying rent equivalent to \$45-\$75 CAD per month. Many are single parents due to death, abandonment, or separation resulting from violence within the family. Parents range in age from 22 to 30 years of age and have a basic level of education (primary school and possibly some secondary/high school).

Employment for families includes; driving, part-time retail, ad-hoc construction and home workers. Some parents will also sell produce and goods on the street or in a community market. Teenagers are often called upon to help with care of younger siblings or to supplement income by doing jobs outside the home.

Due to the work activities and their basic level of education, parents are unable to support their children with school work. This leads to children developing poor study habits and learning difficulties in basic arithmetic, literacy, spelling, language as well as behavioral issues (rebelliousness, aggression, low self-esteem).

## Solution

Help Bolivia Foundation's Objective is to relieve poverty in Bolivia by providing programs that deliver education, counselling and nutrition to underprivileged children as well as skills training to underprivileged women and youth. Help Bolivia is currently targeting change in the community of Tahuantinsuyo, El Alto. Our programs are run through the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre.

The Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre supports vulnerable Aymara and Quechua families living in extreme poverty by offering nutritional and educational programming and psychological support. We also conduct training sessions on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and domestic violence among our beneficiaries. We offer support to victims of SGBV through counselling sessions.

The Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre is in a rough part of El Alto, the rapidly growing city on the outskirts of La Paz. The families referred to the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre have additional stress in their lives: they may have malnourished children, children with learning disabilities, or they may be victims of abandonment or abuse. Many come from single parent households, or are living with domestic violence. Community leaders and the local school identify which families will benefit most from the Centre.

### Nutrition Program

**The Issue:** Malnutrition and hunger are factors in how well a child succeeds in school. Many children in Bolivia suffer from malnutrition and hunger, and have difficulties learning because of this. Families that are poor are not able to provide the proper nutrition growing children need.

**Solution:** To combat hunger and malnutrition, Help Bolivia started a nutrition program at the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre. We hired a cook, renovated the kitchen, brought in tables and benches, worked with nutritionists in Bolivia to develop a menu, and stocked the kitchen with cooking and eating utensils. Children receive nutritious snacks in the morning and afternoon, and at lunch time they receive a nutritious hot soup starter and a nutritious main plate.



### Education Program

**The Issue:** Children in Bolivia attend school only half-a-day. Often, parents are unable to help children with homework, as in many cases they have little education themselves. There are few if any resources for children who have learning disabilities. Children living in situations of high stress (extreme poverty, abuse, abandonment) require support to learn coping mechanisms, and how to protect themselves.

**Solution:** Help Bolivia is addressing the need for educational support by running a program to address the needs of children with learning disabilities, with on-site educators to provide supplemental educational support to children who will not have support at home. Help Bolivia pays the salaries of the educators, purchases educational supplies and equipment, and receives regular reporting from the team in Bolivia. The education support program includes support to foster academic growth, with learning objectives specific to the chronological age of the child and related to the school grade; Academic intervention for children with learning difficulties; Support to develop social, psychological and emotional well-being through counselling and personal development activities; and an outreach component to educate children on their rights, to help prevent them from becoming victims of violence and/or sexual assault - this is conducted through workshops and presentations at both the community centre and the schools.



### Psychological Support

**The Issue:** Children are referred to the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre when they are in situations of child abuse, sexual abuse, parental domestic violence, and/or abandonment. These children need psychological counselling services to help cope with these traumas.

**Solution:** Help Bolivia is addressing this problem by providing regular psychological counselling sessions.

### Skills Training Programs

**The Issue:** Many migrants who have moved to El Alto from the countryside do not have the education or skills to gain steady employment, which keeps the families in a cycle of migration, separation and poverty. Women and youth are particularly lacking in education and employable skills, and need training programs to teach them skills to improve their employment opportunities, and help raise them out of poverty.

**Solution:** Help Bolivia will address the need for skills training by offering workshops and training programs. Proposals in the works for 2020 include workshops and training programs to teach skills in entrepreneurship, sewing/knitting, basic electrical and construction, and the hospitality and service industry.

Our programs are designed with the following key objectives:

1. Reduce the incidence of malnutrition with the children of the community.
2. Have children stay in school longer. Supporting children with nutritional and educational support helps ensure they are better educated with some children going on to post-secondary schools for vocational training and degree programs. All of these scenarios will lead to improved opportunities to better paying jobs.
3. Reduce the number of drop outs. Currently in the community, many children leave school to help support their family by working as a day labourers or selling items on the streets/markets.
4. Increase the average income in the community by proving educational support to children and vocational training to parents so they can obtain higher payer jobs or create valued items themselves and needed skills in the community.
5. Reduce the incidence of violence in the home, both spousal abuse and violence against the children. By educating children on respecting others and providing support to mothers on services and support mechanisms available, we will reduce the violence in the community.

In 2019:

1. The lunch program and education support benefitted 601 Bolivians; 60 children (ages 3-18) attending the centre were direct beneficiaries, and 540 children and adults in the community were indirect beneficiaries.
2. School children, teachers and parents benefitted from the workshops put on by Help Bolivia in the schools to prevent sexual and domestic violence.
3. 34 impoverished families benefit by having Help Bolivia provide nutrition to their children in the program, which relieves their family budget.

There are 15 children between 3 and 18 who are on the waiting list for our programs.

### Fund Raising and Sustainability

Help Bolivia Foundation has a broad and growing donor base with monthly and one-time donations. We have engaged fund-raising platforms including CanadaHelps, Benevity and GlobalGiving to help connect with donors. We continue to have fund-raising activities including galas, online auctions and special events to raise the awareness of the plight of the indigenous children and families in the poorest country in South America. In 2020 Help Bolivia Foundation will pursue corporate investment and government grants, as we believe that sustainability will result from diverse funding streams.

## 2019 Objectives and Outcomes

For the 2019 reporting period we identified the following objectives.

1. Expand the lunch program established in 2018.

OUTCOME: The program expanded to provide nutritious meals to over 60 children, often surging to 70 children when hungry siblings, not in school, also visited the community centre.

2. Apply and obtain recognition as a registered charitable organization by the Canada Revenue Agency.

OUTCOME: We submitted our registration application in December 2018 and received notification that Help Bolivia Foundation was registered with CRA in June 2019. This enables us to issue tax receipts to our Canadian donors.

3. Plan and hold fund-raising Galas in both Calgary and Montreal.

OUTCOME: Galas were held in Calgary in April 2019, and Montreal in October 2019. A number of new monthly donors signed up at both events. There were also successful Live & Silent auctions held, and entertainment at both events included Bolivian dancers, and artists performing Live Art. We increased awareness about our work, and gained new donors and supporters.

4. Director visit to project in El Alto, Bolivia.

OUTCOME: Three Directors accompanied by two donors visited the community centre project in Tahuantinsuyo in March. We visited local families in their homes and conducted video and photo interviews with teachers, the local school principal, mothers, and the educators at the community centre. This gave us a better understanding of the challenges and helped us to communicate with our donor base.

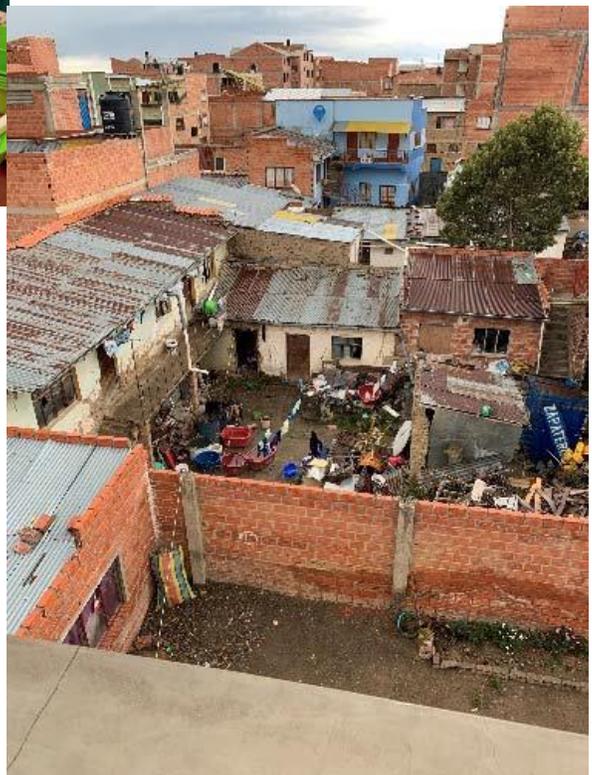
5. Expand awareness of challenges in Bolivia and what Help Bolivia is doing to help.

OUTCOME: We set up a tent at the inaugural June 2019 Airdrie Pride festival to show support for the festival, and we managed to sell a selection of Bolivian handicrafts and received some donations. We held a Paint Night in July at a local pub where 20 aspiring artists painted in support of Help Bolivia. We held a pub night fundraiser in August that included a silent auction, which also attracted new supporters. In September we participated at the Bolivia table at Cochrane Culturefest where 16 different countries were represented. Throughout the year we continued updates to website <https://helpbolivia.org>, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook to help ensure donors were kept up to date on activities and what is happening in Bolivia. Through social media we continue to gain new supporters and donors.



Visiting the Tahuantinsuyo community centre in March 2019.

Community of Tahuantinsuyo where Help Bolivia operates.





Cochrane Culturefest – Bolivia table.



Year end celebrations with families at the community centre.

### Non-financial Highlights and Achievements

- Since July 2018 a nutrition program has directly benefited 50-60 children per year with snacks and a hot lunch served 5 days a week. As a result, among mal- or under-nourished children ages 1-6, there has been an improvement over 5-6 months, demonstrated by higher energy levels, the children are active for longer periods of time, and they have a greater intellectual capacity and increased vocal expression. We also see an increase in the numbers of children and parents who have become knowledgeable about the nutritional value of food, and the importance of practicing good hygiene and cleanliness.

- In 2019, 60 children from 34 families living in extreme poverty benefited from this nutrition program, which also relieved their family budget of approximately 200 bolivianos a month (approximately \$39 CAD).
- Over 200 school children (plus teachers and some parents) benefited from the workshops put on by Help Bolivia in the schools, to help prevent sexual and domestic violence. This has supported increased levels of awareness among women, men, girls and boys in the area about the harmful impacts of Domestic and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Additionally, the Centre has become a safe space where women and girls can seek psychological support and advice for how to safely report abuse.
- We employed 6 Bolivians – 3 full time, and 3 part time.
- We grew to a donor base of over 180 individuals all over the world, including 50 monthly donors.
- In January 2019 Help Bolivia became licensed under the Alberta Charitable Fund-Raising Act.
- In June 2019 Help Bolivia became a registered Canadian charity under the Federal Income Tax Act.
- In September 2019 Help Bolivia held its first AGM.
- In December 2019 Help Bolivia gained a permanent spot on GlobalGiving, the world’s largest crowdfunding platform.

## Finances

Since incorporating as a charity following a trip to Bolivia in February 2018, there has been increasing financial support from family, friends and a network of donors from across Canada and around the world that want to help the children and families in Bolivia. For 2019, Help Bolivia branded a monthly contribution program as the Lunch Buddy program, where donors could donate as little as \$5 a month to help feed a child in the program. This program has been very successful with an increasing number of Monthly subscribers as seen in Figure 3- Monthly Lunch Buddy Revenue.

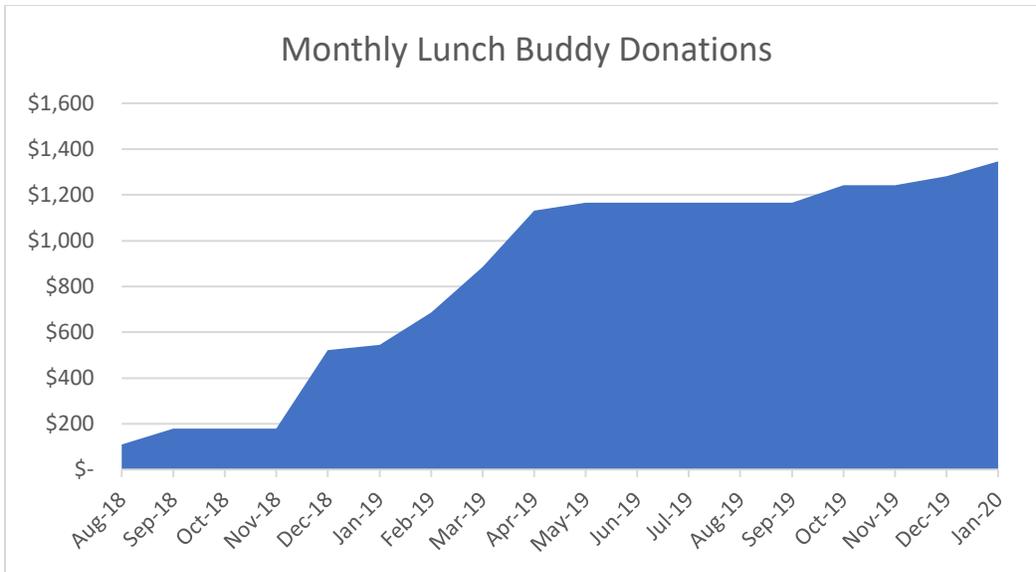


Figure 3- Monthly Lunch Buddy Revenue

For the 2019 reporting period, Help Bolivia had an operating budget of \$59,492 CAD that supported the program funding in Bolivia of \$56,605 CAD as well as fund-raising in Canada. The operating budget for fund-raising costs in Canada were \$2,888 CAD.

Details on the breakdown of the budget and operating costs are available upon request.

A 2019 financial report was prepared by the Help Bolivia Treasurer who is a CA/CPA. The financial report was reviewed and audited independently by Help Bolivia board members. Details on the 2019 financial report is available upon request.

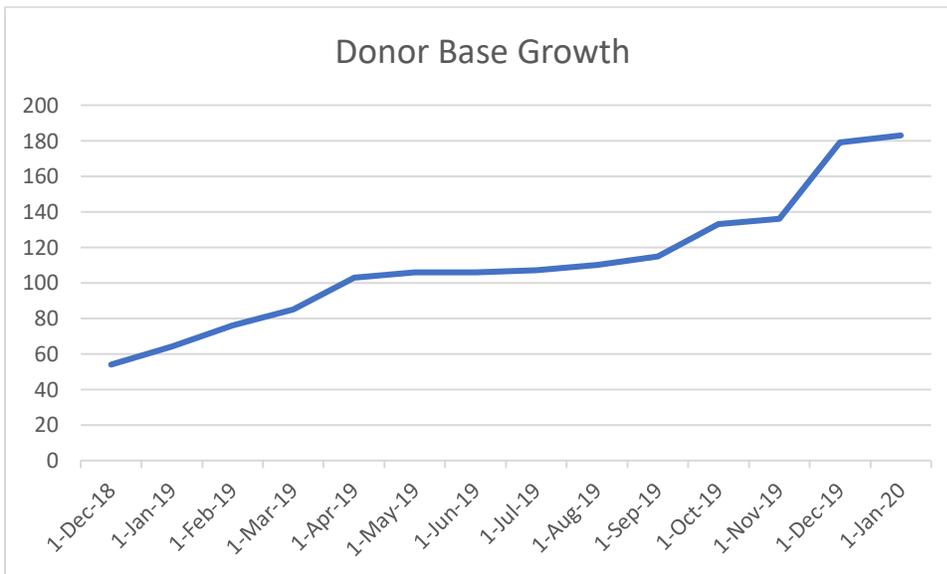


Figure 4 Number of Donors Growing Over Time

Expanding the donor base including monthly Lunch Buddy subscribers, as well as one-time donors, was a priority for the 2019 reporting period. The outcomes of the growth in the donor base can be seen in Figure 4 Number of Donors Growing Over Time.

## Plan Going Forward

In January 2020 *Help Bolivia Foundation* will become an official member of COCAB, a cooperation of Canadian charities working in Bolivia. This will provide networking and partnership opportunities in Bolivia. Directors Matt and Lydia will attend the annual assembly in La Paz in March 2020.

Also, in March 2020, *Help Bolivia Foundation* will meet with *Helping Hands Bolivia* to begin collaboration discussions for assistance from *Helping Hands Bolivia* for the graduating students attending the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre. This Bolivia based non-profit provides support for students to attend post secondary education.

*Help Bolivia Foundation* will begin vocational technical training programs in 2020, beginning with a sewing training & entrepreneurship program. This will be the first program to teach employable skills to the adults and youth in the Tahuantinsuyo community. Additional technical/vocational training programs to be brought in over the next few years include hairdressing, construction, driving, and electrical installation. *Help Bolivia Foundation* will work closely with the *Sariry Foundation* in Bolivia to determine which programs are a priority for the community.

*Help Bolivia Foundation* plans to expand the number of children supported at the Centre to 70, which is the maximum capacity for the building itself. There are families on the waiting list, and there is no shortage of need in the community.

In the next five years, as our donor and grant funding base grow, *Help Bolivia Foundation* plans to replicate the programs at the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre in other areas of need in El Alto. Until the Bolivian Government is able to provide the support these migrant families need, *Help Bolivia Foundation* will be there for them.

## 2019 Financial Report

**HELP BOLIVIA FOUNDATION****BALANCE SHEET**

For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

**ASSETS****Current Assets**

Cash on Hand - Chequing Account	1,288.16
Cash on Hand - Paypal	133.42
Total Cash on Hand	<u>1,421.58</u>
Receivable from Global Giving	<u>6,952.92</u>
Prepaid to Bolivia	<u>1,970.39</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>10,344.89</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><b>10,344.89</b></u>

**LIABILITIES****Current Liabilities**

Advance from Board Members	29,470.17
Advance from Board Members	58.69
Advance from Board Members	<u>75.21</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>29,604.07</u>
Net Assets - Unrestricted	<u>-19,259.18</u>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

10,344.89  
0.00

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

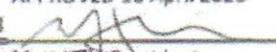
For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

**REVENUES**

Calgary Gala	8,336.00
Montreal Gala	11,714.00
Pub and Paint Nights	2,792.00
Grants	107.00
Global Giving	6,969.92
Donations	23,566.40
Merchandise	2,677.75

**TOTAL REVENUES**56,163.07**EXPENSES****Administrative Expenses**

Paypal fees	498.08
Bank, CCRD Fees	341.82
Global Giving Fees	17.00
Admin	738.85
Office Supplies	245.30
Postage	3.80
Wire Transfer - bank fees	375.00
Government fees	25.00

Volunteer Education	220.03	
Loss on Foreign Exchange	-79.42	
<b>Total Administrative Expenses</b>	<b>2,385.46</b>	
<b>Fundraising Expenses</b>		
Calgary Gala	8093.31	
Montreal Gala	6341.47	
Fundraising Expenses, non Gala	1437.34	
Merchandise	1,508.48	
<b>Total Fundraising Expenses</b>	<b>17,380.60</b>	Prepared by:
		Louise (Jenifer) Siebrasse CA
		Treasurer, Help Bolivia Foundation
<b>Program Expenditures</b>		
Electronic Security	857.11	13141 rue d'Ancourt
School, Nutrition and Health program	50,634.91	Pierrefonds QC H8Z 1R5
Employee	3,010.96	(514) 624-9303
Facility Operation	634.20	
Administrative Expenses	519.00	
<b>Total Program Expenditures</b>	<b>55,656.19</b>	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>75,422.25</b>	
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>-19,259.18</b>	APPROVED 16 April 2020
		
		Matt Hill - President
		
		Louise (Jenifer) Siebrasse - Treasurer

## Information about Help Bolivia Foundation

Help Bolivia Foundation was founded by Matt and Lydia Hill following a trip to Bolivia in March 2018. The foundation was incorporated in Alberta, Canada on May 22, 2018, and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is made up of experienced individuals with expertise in education, board governance, charity law, and finance.

Help Bolivia has volunteers in Canada, the U.S., Spain, and Colombia. Our Volunteer Team is made up of experienced individuals with expertise in International Development, Project Management, Grant Applications, and Fund Development.

Help Bolivia also employs one Employee in Bolivia.

On June 4th, 2019 Help Bolivia Foundation became a registered Canadian charity, CRA #71315 5513 RR0001.

Help Bolivia Foundation Board of Directors as of Q2 2020

Matt Hill, AB	President
Lydia Hill, AB	Secretary
Henry Wiens CPA/CGA, AB	Treasurer
Heidi Hill, AB	Director
Bob Laws, AB	Director
Sabrina Niesman, AB	Director
Kristy Rouleau, ON	Director

Help Bolivia Foundation's employee in Bolivia, Daniel Orgaz, works with the Bolivian non-profit *Sariry Foundation* to administer our programs at the Tahuantinsuyo Community Centre.

Help Bolivia Foundation operates under the 100% Model. 100% of donations are applied to the programs in Bolivia. All administration expenses for 2019 were again covered by Matt and Lydia Hill.

Directors visit the project annually to oversee the project, develop relationships with potential partners, attend meetings, take photos for newsletters and fundraising appeals, and a variety of other tasks associated with managing a charity. Travel expenses are paid personally by the directors traveling, and not from Foundation funds.

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Maps sourced from Google Maps