

2021-2022 Yearbook



•IVEP
International Volunteer Exchange Program

•SALT•
Serving And Learning Together

•YAMEN!
Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network

Dear 2021–2022 IVEPers, SALTERs
and YAMENers,

You have inspired me in many ways. In the midst of an ongoing global pandemic, you made the decision to serve God and others in foreign places. You chose bravery, compassion, courage and humility over comfort and all that was familiar to you. You challenged yourself to new opportunities to learn and to grow. Your experience of learning and growth might be different from other's. Each is unique and incomparable, but it changed you in some ways.

There may have been a time when you had to be patient and forgiving to others and even to yourself during a time of adjustment and transition. A time when you learned and discovered new things about yourself and things that are beyond yourself throughout the year, grieved and almost gave up, powered through obstacles and frustrations and searched for meaning in the midst of it all.

There might also have been a time when you felt God's grace and love through a new way of worship, through the people you journeyed with or through creation and nature that surrounded you. A time when you found home and felt belonging in a place that was once unfamiliar and strange, celebrated your wins, successes and accomplishments, and wished you did not have to say goodbye.



My hope is that you will continue to choose bravery, compassion, courage and humility as you move forward with your life. I hope you practice gentleness and patience with yourself as you navigate your return to your home country and culture. I also hope you extend grace to others who might not understand your experience and how it changed you.

As you read through different stories in this yearbook, may you embrace the joy, laughter, pain and tears. May you see and be reminded of God's love, grace and faithfulness. May you remember that you have participated in sharing and witnessing God's love and compassion for and through your brothers and sisters all over the world. May you find faith and hope as you continue to journey forward.

Febri Kristiani
Global Service Learning Administrative Assistant



GLOBAL SERVICE LEARNING

MCC Global Service Learning Department Staff



Chris Landes — Global Service Learning Director (Based in Akron, PA)



Andrea Geiser Leaman — IVEP U.S. and YAMEN Coordinator (Based in Akron, PA)



Wade Snowdon — SALT Coordinator (Based in Winnipeg, MB)



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Global Service Learning (GSL) Department's purpose and mission is to develop and resource short-term, introductory service-learning opportunities within MCC with the aim of facilitating increased understanding and relationships among communities worldwide. Current programs include: SALT, IVEP, YAMEN, Seed and Seek. GSL also resources Work and Learn Teams and Learning Tours, SOOP (Canada), Summerbridge and Summer Service.

IVEP



**Christian Berambaye
Nawai**



Omar Yesid Borja Perera



Juliet Dias



**Oleksandr "Alex"
Kachkovskyi**



Ritika Khatri



Hyojae Kwak



Luis Magopeia



Rufaro Manyureni



Placido Messelela



**Ayibongwe "Thandeka"
Ncube**



**Miguel "Angel" Neri
Carbot**



Daniel Otoide



Monica Raharjo



Stefanny Sierra Mendoza



Tri Sumarni

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Christian Berambaye Nawai (*Chad*)

Network Operation Trainee, Goshen College
Goshen, Indiana



First Impression or Differences: Relationship between older and younger people and household chores sharing. In Akron at orientation, we had a bike ride with MCC friends who are of all ages. We had a really good time chatting, networking and asking questions on how to integrate in

the U.S. In Chad, it is uncommon to see older people spending time with younger ones unless it is for a special occasion. My host dad shares household chores, he does the cooking, cleaning and I can literally tell how happy his wife is.

Memorable or Funny Experience: We had a national retreat in February at Camp Friedenswald (Michigan). We went to the dunes on Lake Michigan. There was a piece of art done by someone who might have been there before. We loved the art piece and took pictures with it. The art says, “I love you.” I wondered why the person did that? But let me tell you something, it is always good to leave a positive footprint wherever we find ourselves at.

Faith Journey: I grew up attending a church where praise and worship times are mostly expressive with dances and moves. Here, it is mostly quiet and different, but I have learned something new as well: there are different ways of worshiping and having fellowship with God. Unfortunately, I have noticed the youth are not present at church and are not really involved in church activities.

Career/Professional Development: Having an IT background and serving in a college, there is nothing I can request more. I have learned to embrace and adapt to different technologies.

New Perspectives: The view of myself has not really changed. I am rather shaped and empowered toward the person I have always dreamed to be in the society, the brick that will play its role in the building and be more of a cornerstone tying together other bricks and keep my surrounding up standing. The U.S. is the most diverse place I have ever been to. The neighborhood is a mix of different cultures and different people from different states owning properties; whereas, in Chad, it is not easy and common to see that. It is uncommon to see a Chadian from the south owning properties in the northern and eastern part of the country and we, the youth, need to open up and accept others in our communities and regions. Last but not the least, churches in the U.S., particularly Mennonite churches where I have attended one of them, are communities of peace and a

real demonstration of love and acceptance of others. The churches really reach out and support the needy. As Jesus has mentioned and I quote: “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40).

Future Plans: I have learned more than an experience; trainings will be the means to integrate what I have gotten into my church and community.

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Omar Yesid Borja Perera (*Colombia*)

Spanish Teaching Assistant, Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, Virginia



First Impression or Differences: A big difference is the lifestyle that people in my assignment community lead: their way of sharing, of acting, of enjoying special moments is totally different from my culture.

Memorable or Funny Experience: In winter, being able to feel and touch the snow by spending time outside with my host family and sliding down the snow, making a snow angel, burying one of my host siblings completely with snow, and walking to my host siblings’ grandmother’s house for breakfast, cookies and hot chocolate.

Faith Journey: Every day that I wake up, it is a fact that God is there, always protecting me and continuing to bless me in the moments of uncertainty and happiness of my life.

Career/Professional Development: I have learned to have confidence in myself to be very versatile in teaching, that is, to be able to find the best way to teach depending on the student’s learning pace and I have also developed other skills.

New Perspectives: This service helped me to value my culture more, to want to ask more questions about things I don’t know, to discover that I can improve much more as a person and in my professional life, to know that the world is vast and that although we speak different languages and we have different skin color, we are all human beings and God loves us equally.

Future Plans: I want my community to grow in the use of English.

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Juliet Dias (*Bangladesh*)
Teacher Assistant, Freeman Academy
Freeman, South Dakota



First Impression or Differences:
I belong to a country where the population is 167 million. When I first came to my assignment city which is Freeman, I saw it was a small city in South Dakota where the population is only 1,200+. Another thing is I have grown up in a big city. But in Freeman, the community I am living in a farmer community. I had never seen people so close who are involved with farming. In my city I always use public transport but here in Freeman we don't have any public transport. People can start driving at the age of 14, which surprised me a lot, because in my country we can't drive before 18.

Memorable or Funny Experience: South Dakota is the coldest state in the U.S. I have never experienced snow before in my country. On November 11, 2021, I had experienced my first snow which made me emotional and was a memorable day for me in my IVEP journey.

Faith Journey: Coming so far from my country and living without family at first was very hard for me. I am the youngest member of my family. I have never lived without my family. Living in a new family, in a community, new place, with new languages, culture and rules was difficult for me. And that time I started to believe more in God. Every day before going to bed I always pray one thing: God give me strength to finish this journey. As a human being it's normal that sometimes I get mad, sometimes I question myself and my faith. But attending church on every Sunday and doing chapel in school on every Wednesday helped me to build my faith stronger.

Career/Professional Development: Technology. Currently I am working with the 4th–6th grade. And the teacher from this grade is excellent in technology. I am learning a lot from her. Using various educational apps, how to use print machines in a different way, different new education websites, etc. I have learned from her. Another thing is communicating with people. And building a bond with coworkers.

New Perspectives: About myself, I think I was impatient, not focused, dependent on others. But after coming here and living here, I have become more patient with situations and try to do my stuff myself rather than being dependent on others. About my home country, people are very friendly and good at hospitality. I had thought people in the U.S. might not be like that, but in Freeman the way people accept me and their welcoming

attitude amazed me a lot. Beside my host family I have so many well-wishers in Freeman. And about church, I am Catholic believer. In my church we do pray more than sing. But here I like the worship songs. Song can be a way of praising the Lord, keeping your prayers to the Lord and also to calm yourself.

Future Plans: After returning from here I'll find a job. My plan is to apply to Bangladesh MCC. (Let's hope for the best.) I chose MCC because I have been here almost one month and the way MCC works for peace and development through the faith in the Lord, it amazed me. I always want to do something for others rather than prefer a desk job in a private company. I think getting an MCC job will help me to accomplish my dream. And if I get job with MCC or any other missionary organization it will help me to apply what I have learned here.

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Oleksandr "Alex" Kachkovskyi (*Ukraine*)
Ministry Intern, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pennsylvania, and Chaplain Assistant, Fairmount Homes, Ephrata, Pennsylvania



First Impression or Differences:
When I arrived in the USA, I met lovely, positive, kind and generous people who always smile and are ready to help. Shop assistants talk to you and are interested about your day. Also, I noticed the grass is greener and much more sunshine in this marvelous place. Amish culture and lifestyle were unique and memorable.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I liked when we went to the market for groceries, coffee time, cooking traditional Ukrainian dishes and our trips in different and outstanding places of the U.S. Well, funny moment—I flooded the bathroom and basement before Christmas Day and we together cleaned and dried it; I guess it was unforgettable memories.

Faith Journey: One of the struggles—I compared myself in the USA with my previous self and cultural experience and background from Ukraine. It seemed to me I had become a tremendously relaxed Christian because I hadn't been doing different kinds of ministries as I was doing at my home church. I didn't read much Bible and prayed less than I had been doing before and, as a result, I felt myself not being a strong spiritual person. New insights—lovely and friendly atmosphere of respect, peace and acceptance in my community, host family and placements.

Career/Professional Development: I started to develop in media ministry and it provoked me to make my video blog/channel on YouTube (cooking traditional dishes, traveling, interesting information about Ukraine and its culture, traditions, language). Working with kids helped me to be in shape as we played tag and I always was the tagger. Serving with teenagers and young adults made me more relaxed and open, trying to ask questions and observe their lifestyle. Church stuff showed and taught me how to analyze and organize a worship service, make it well done, how to make a peacebuilding dialogue, respect and help people and not judge them. Chaplaincy at Fairmount Homes let me become more compassionate, listen more and give my time and presence for those fellows who need it and, at the same time, take wise, life-experienced advice. God blessed me to be in touch with all age groups, being in such a diverse community changed and developed my worldview and theology.

New Perspectives: I got assurance to respect, love and help everyone despite his/her background, religion, language. I wish my first reaction to be—love my neighbor and not to judge.

Future Plans: My desire and dream is to be a peacemaker and to make a peacebuilding project/dialogue (especially nowadays [with the conflict in Ukraine]) in our country, community, church, society, spreading the Kingdom of God.

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Ritika Khati (*Nepal*)

Generalist, Cora Dale House—
Elkhart County Clubhouse
Goshen, Indiana



First Impression or Differences:

Jetlagged! Sleepy during the daytime and awake at night. At South Bend Airport, I was welcomed by my colleagues. I was surprised and overwhelmed to hear the birthday song out of nowhere, their sweet gestures and of course lots of questions. I entered a warm

house with love and good food where I met my host family. I have been connected, curious, learning, and shared trials and happiness together with them. I received the precious gift of families and friends in Christ.

Memorable or Funny Experience: One evening, even though it was about to rain, my host family, me, along with Jemi the dog, went out for a walk without an umbrella. In between, it started to rain heavily. Guess what! We kept on walking in the rain, it was so calming though, all wet, enjoying ourselves, laughing together all the way back home. That is just a glimpse; there are

many fond activities we shared, played games, cooked, made *momo* and spent time with grandkids. With kids, I found myself being curious about putting their imagination into words, receiving purest love, caring, warmest hugs, sweet smiles, etc. At Camp Friedenswald during the mid-year retreat we experienced spring, cold and summer weather in one week. I remember one late afternoon Tri, Stefanny and I decided to swim out in the lake. It was pretty relaxing and cold; we observed, listened, smelled, wished, took deep breaths and thanked God for the beautiful scenario. Embracing the moment together with IVEPers, memories, fun, games, playing with snow, sledding, skiing, walking together in dunes, watching movies, etc.

Faith Journey: I am loved, I feel love, I feel God. Reminiscing on my faith journey, there were high and lows. It is never stopping, but God has given peace, even in the darkest days. One who will, will be and is with me is by my side.

Career/Professional Development: I saw the reintegration of people who are going or gone through mental illness. I observed, listened, accepted, talked, helped, taught, shared as I heard and saw broken relationships, trials around self-care, losing self-control. Socializing is the best option, but isolation isn't. I got to explore the community, fostered a better understanding of mental illness, collaborated with members on jobs, housing, public assistance and private affairs. Identifying what's better for them.

New Perspectives: Each individual has their own way to express and experience God. Listening to different perspectives, from different people, the culture, language, viewpoints, holding Christ at the center. Indeed, individual relationships with God matter the most—to know, to rely, to express, to submit, to understand, to restore. But gathering together, praising, learning, encouraging, supporting are his ways in understanding and growing with each other and with God.

Future Plans: I wanted to share an experience of IVEP time, about people I met so far, share blessings and about the clubhouse concept (with a focus on rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration into the community), overall structure, ideas, processes, etc. I could sense God's ways and wanted do as per his will. Sharing experiences, teaching what I have learned. "The best thanksgiving is thanksgiving."

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Hyojae Kwak (*Republic of Korea*)

Teacher Assistant, Della Lamb Community Services
Kansas City, Missouri



First Impression or Differences:

Kansas City is a peaceful city with four seasons. People communicate with their neighbors actively here unlike in Seoul and the houses look different. In Seoul, where I came from, many people live in apartments, while it is common for people here to live in two-

story houses with yards. People have a birthday party in the yard, make a fire with their friends, and make a barbecue. I can feel that relationships with people are important here. There are also various communities that help people who do not have a place to stay, people from other countries, and people suffering from various reasons.

Memorable or Funny Experience: First, I remember making pumpkin muffins with my kids in the classroom around Halloween. Before making the muffins, we let kids scoop out the seeds and pulp with their hands to feel and observe them. It was the first time for most kids and me as well. Kids shouted and said that the feeling of touching the inside of the pumpkins was strange and smelly. I had to help them finish because they just wanted to wash their hands. It was also not easy for me to do it. It felt like pulling someone's completely wet hair hard. However, it was a fun activity for both my kids and me, and meaningful to have the new experience with them. Also, I remember going to see the Christmas lights decorated by my neighbors with my host family around Christmas. They were amazingly beautiful, and I could feel how much people here loved to celebrate the holidays. It was also a meaningful experience that I can see the gap between the rich and the poor in the States.

Faith Journey: The biggest thing I learned here was to rely on God and experience God who fills my life. After coming here, I was worried about what I would do when I returned to Korea. When I felt worried, I tried to focus on my current life here and participate more deeply in the community, reminding myself of how special and precious my year here was. The place where I work, the church, and the host family always supported me and prayed for me. By experiencing God who fills my life more than I wanted, I could feel that God listens to my prayers and he takes care of me. When I wanted a candle for my room, I got a gift from an unexpected place. When I wanted a cup of coffee, my friend took me to the coffee shop. Also, when I needed letter paper because I wanted to give a prayer card with Christmas gifts to my friends, I received a letter envelope as a gift. Finally, I joined the John Bible study from September to April

with my church family every Tuesday evening. It was an abundantly grateful and enjoyable time to hang out with my church friends, read the Bible in English and Korean, answer questions and learn more deeply about God than I had experienced in Korea. The weekly meeting with church friends and asking each other how they were doing was also helpful a lot for me to adjust here. When I return to Korea, I will miss this Bible study meeting the most.

Career/Professional Development: I learned that kids have their own strengths, weaknesses and distinct personal preferences, and that they need individualized learning plans accordingly. I have met many friends from various countries in my pre-kindergarten classroom. Not only do they use different languages, clothing, and eating habits, but they all have different tendencies from other home environments. They helped me become a teacher who thinks more and tries to educate them in a variety of ways. It was also helpful for me to remember the Bible and how Jesus taught Peter and Thomas when children had difficulty learning. Just as he gave his disciples many opportunities with love, I tried to understand my kids more and find ways to be more individualized. "Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe'" (John 20:27, NRSV). "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs'" (John 21:15, NRSV).

New Perspectives: I have learned that every person is valuable, should be respected, and equal in God, even if our appearance and way of living are different. For a long time, I have had a question of what respect is for people. I realized that this was not something I could learn from a book, nor something I could learn in a day. About eight months after I lived here, I was able to find the answer by having various experiences with my body. Through Della Lamb Community Services where I worked and my church, I met several families, including adoptive families, foster care families, refugee families, families who do not eat meats, couples who aren't married but live together, families from Latin America and families raising children alone. Here, children are exposed to diversity from an early age and naturally learn to respect each other. And I was able to see for myself how important it was in human relationships.

In addition, regardless of age, race, or career, the experience of working in a respectful and equal way has been a great inspiration to me. It will have a great influence on my work in the future as well. In particular, I am very grateful to have a valuable experience when I am a young adult. For many days of my life, I will respect and treat people as I have learned, and I want to be a person who has a good influence wherever I go.

Future Plans: Working at Della Lamb Community Services and spending time with my host family and my church friends here had a big impact on me. When I go back to Korea, I want to prepare for graduate school of psychology and come back to the United States to study here. While in Korea, I want to find a good church around my house and live a life of faith with my neighbors with love, support and peace.

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Luís Magopeia (*Mozambique*)

Youth Assistant Instructor,
River City Community Development Corporation
Chicago, Illinois



The First Impression or Differences:

The first aspects to give me attention in Chicago and other parts of the U.S provided a new perception toward my home country in terms of culture and lifestyle. I think culture is a standard which makes us live in different ways, such as the way we worship the same God, food, relationships, clothes, etc.

Memorable or Funny Experience: The funny experiences I consider like marks of my history and simultaneously as experiences I'll carry after the IVEP program. The most memorable experience which I won't forget is wintertime in Chicago when it started snowing. I was confused where it was from. And, the following day I went to do tuckpointing [brickwork]. At the beginning, everything was doing good, but a few hours later I started feeling pains on my fingers and on my feet. After a few minutes, my fingers were frozen. I tried to put on the layer of gloves. It did not serve to help and took effort to do our day's work. I had ridden a bicycle to work, so when I left work I decided to ride my bicycle to get home as early as possible because it was cold. I started riding the bicycle. While I was riding, I felt pain in my ears because I didn't have a hat to cover them. At that moment, I got home by walking and holding the bicycle and smiling.

Faith Journey: When I applied to the IVEP program, I felt God calling me to his commandment because he was using my nephew as an encourager to the IVEP program. At that moment, I understood the might of God manifesting in him. And when I got accepted, I gave myself to God by prayer to prepare my journey. At that time, I felt the new journey was through the wilderness. It was a covenant which I made to him. So, when the world was devastated by COVID-19, I put my faith in Jesus to get hope for the following year of the program that was an amazing moment lived. Here in the U.S., my faith journey has gone well when I see other sons of God expressing their faith.

Career/Professional Development: I am so grateful to have been in the U.S. because I've seen my skills growing with other careers. My experience has been large in learning different skills, which were unexpected. But the most influential were the After School Program, construction skills and HVAC (air conditioning).

New Perspectives: Having been here in the U.S. and working with the people of different cultures is important and it brings new perspectives to myself. I am able to work with different people and ready to share or contribute those new perspectives to my church.

Future Plans: I hope to implement what I am learning here if God provides the opportunities which can help me and other people. And my integration back to life in Mozambique will be very simple with peace and love to all, sharing to all. It will depend on my community and how they will receive me, but I am willing to share what I am learning.

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Rufaro Manyureni (*Zimbabwe*)

Restorative Mediation and Facilitation Services Assistant
Elkhart, Indiana



First Impression or Differences:

Dumbfounded would be the best word for my first impressions of Elkhart. How was I possibly going to survive for 11 months in such a small county and worse, this was not the ideal picture I had of America. Coming from a big, buzzing city, the capital of

Zimbabwe, Harare, this was a radical turnaround for me. I felt better when I was told I would be staying a stone's throw away from the downtown only to discover that it was just nine blocks and everything that makes up the little town was all in one street, lol. This demanded more than an adjustment but rather more of intentional cultural assimilation.

Memorable or Funny Experience: My funny experience started the very day I landed in America at Dulles in Washington, D.C. This is where my cultural shock began. After our long flight on arrival, I certainly needed to relieve myself. I found my way to the bathroom, used it and just the moment I stood up, the toilet system just automatically started flushing on its own. WHAT ON EARTH WAS HAPPENING?!! I was baffled and troubled for a while. In the moment, I thought something spiritual was going on.

Faith Journey: My spiritual growth and maturity would be one thing I have highly achieved during my stay in America. I thought it would be easy living outside my comfort zone. Honestly, it's easier said than done. God has remained consistent in my lowest and highest moments as I navigated life in the IVEP program.

Career/Professional Development: The legal profession has always been broad, but be that as it may, I had never in my wildest dreams come across what is termed as Restorative Justice. Center for Community Justice (CCJ) has equipped me with mediation skills, conflict resolution skills and restorative justice methods. Through the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, I have learned to view crime and its impact through restorative lenses. In our processes, we empower victims of harm, giving them a voice and space to speak to the people who have harmed them. The main goal is to at least make things right for the parties. Coming from a punitive system, I have always been of the understanding that it's only through punishment that we can achieve justice. RJ has taught me that we can achieve favorable, just outcomes too, just by giving people an opportunity to be personally accountable for their wrongs and work toward rectifying things. I hope to merge my litigation skills with my newly learned dispute resolution skills.

New Perspectives: Endurance, patience and open-mindedness are the loudest features I see when I look at myself in the mirror now. I have developed the willingness and desire that acknowledges and takes the initiative to learn other people's cultures without judging them at face value. I was open-minded to a certain degree before I came to the USA, but now I feel like I understand life better with a balanced opinion having lived in a community that thrives on diversity. More so, I learned and realized that we all need each other despite our different ethnicities, backgrounds and race.

Future Plans: I hope I can find organizations that practice Restorative Justice back home. I would love to raise awareness and educate my community and church about the power in making things right and using more restorative methods and language. Also, being mindful of labeling people. For example, instead of calling people offenders or victims, it would be good to start practicing terminology such as "the person harmed" and "the person who caused the harm." Furthermore, I hope to share and teach the conflict resolution skills I have attained here. Overall, in my legal practice I hope to implement my mediation skills and conflict resolution skills when handling disputes.

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Placido Messelela (*Mozambique*)
Youth Art Specialist, The Mix
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



First Impression or Differences: My first impression in the U.S. was the huge airport and lots of aircraft at the same place, which was totally different from the previous ones in Ethiopia and Mozambique. The weather, of course, was something that I didn't know could happen; it was my first time in a zero-degree environment. In Mozambique, 15 degrees Celsius is extremely cold, but here I experienced below zero. It was simply crazy—I just thought I could die but I didn't, bless God. The community here is much more personal and people don't talk too much with their neighbors apart from hi! and hi! In Mozambique, people talk for a long time just to get connected but here everything is scheduled.

Memorable or Funny Experience: A funny and memorable experience that I had was to walk in snow with shorts at home in Pennsylvania and to swim in cold water at our mid-year conference in Great Lakes.

Faith Journey: My difficulties during the first month of the program was to get everything that people were saying. Somehow they were speaking too fast and I was like "yes" and "yes" to everything. I had the same struggles at church: I wasn't understanding the songs at first. But then come the highlights of the second month (and onward) where everything was coming together and starting to be exciting. Recently at our mid-year retreat, I led the IVEP choir at the church in Goshen and also the African group in our cultural experience presentations. Finally, I joined the Laurel Street Mennonite Church choir and, yes, I'm enjoying singing to the Lord. My spiritual goal here in the program is to record a gospel song. I have some 15 songs or so that I wrote and I'd like to record some of them on CD if possible. Another highlight was the art exhibition that we had at Lancaster Bible College. I had the privilege to display my art work there; it was all about telling stories through art and just two artists were there and I was one of the two—so, yes, it was a blessing.

Career/Professional Development: The skills that I learned in the program were to schedule my daily activities, to be responsible and disciplined, to wake up early to attend the early morning school program at the Mornings on Orange Street (MOOS) at Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster (CMCL), then later be at the after-school program at my work placement at The Mix. At The Mix, I learned how to work with kids with different behaviors, how to run an after-school program, and

find out the priorities and the goals, mission, vision and values of an after-school program. I have been able to work with different partners learning what their jobs were, and I glimpsed how they ran their jobs. I learned how to notice the signs of child abuse and how to report it to the authorities for the safety of the students. I also learned about new and different types of games and educational movies.

New Perspectives: After the program, I see everything different because now I have two different realities from different cultures and backgrounds that only I can interpret; I have this unique opportunity to compare both and decide what is relevant and why. I had the experience of living with more resources compared to my life back home. I experienced life in a city and in a countryside. I learned to do hiking with my first host family and I realized that we have so many beautiful places for hiking in Mozambique but we just don't use them because we are not used to hiking.

Future Plans: Back home, I have to finish my school first while I'm preparing the papers to do something—maybe not exactly like The Mix but almost, just because we don't have an after-school program in our entire country. I have the desire to help people with English which is something uncommon in my country. Again, I want to record my songs and spread the gospel through singing at church and around the community. Maybe do Bible studies in English, where young people will learn about God and the English language at the same time.

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Ayibongwe Thandeka Ncube *(Zimbabwe)*

Data, Storytelling and Reporting Specialist,
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries
Fresno, California



First Impression or Differences: Coming into my assignment, I had no hopes and I was not looking forward to anything. This was because I was avoiding going through disappointment; thus I wanted to experience everyday as it is, without expectations. One thing I was quick to notice was the

difference in food prepared for dinner. It amused me that we had just salads or eggs for dinner. I was hungry most of the time.

Memorable or Funny Experience: A memorable experience was my birthday celebration. My host threw a big birthday party for me. It was very emotional celebrating this day away from home, but they made it better. I received lots and lots of beautiful birthday presents from the host's extended family, friends and church members.

From this experience, I learned and came to realize that my host family has taken me to be part of them. Away from home in the U.S., I was at home with people that had my best interests at heart and a little girl that was sweet and loving all the time.

Faith Journey: Serving in the USA has without a doubt brought me closer to God and allowed me to cultivate my faith journey. Moving to the U.S., most of my days were very lonely and I had to occupy myself, so I used most of my time to read, pray and meditate.

Career/Professional Development: During my placement, I have managed to develop my communication skills. My placement consisted of mostly small jobs, like filing and sorting things out in the office. Because of my previous experience, my placement offered me less learning opportunities.

New Perspectives: I have, over time, come to realize that regardless of my state/situation, how people view me, where I am and what I am doing, I am already blessed and I do not need approval from people to believe that—I need myself and an understanding of the cross. I have also come to understand that it is not for me to understand others but to be civil with them. Also, during my time here coming from Africa I came to realize that functioning systems make the lives of the citizens easier. Small things like having running water and electricity everyday made me wish for a better Africa. An Africa that has leaders who have the people at heart.

Future Plans: As I prepare myself to go back home, I am already applying for a job to practice as a social worker to pursue my zeal and love of serving and helping the community. I wish to be part of an organization that addresses mental health issues as this is my area of interest. I also intend to register my mental health organization that has been my baby since 2016. It's where I have and continue to reach people with mental health issues, focusing mainly on minors who have caregivers struggling with mental health issues. I intend to integrate my understanding of cultural differences and clear communication in church, community, organizations and people that I will be in contact with.

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Miguel Angel Neri Carbot *(Mexico)*

Sales Associate,
Ten Thousand Villages and MCC Thrift shop
Goshen, Indiana

First Impression or Differences: As for the community, it was very interesting for me to see how the old people continue to look for things in which they can help and serve, with such a big heart to continue helping others in some way.



Memorable or Funny Experience:

One of the most memorable moments for me was seeing an MCC Material Resources center for the first time because what they manage to do there is something that seemed like a dream for my friends and me, but is something tangible and is being realized. A

very funny moment was at Luis’ house in Chicago; he had an Alexa [virtual assistant] so we started to ask for songs. But there were times that Alexa would tell us: “I don’t understand your request” and we had to repeat it until, at one point, she said, “You must improve your pronunciation and sentences.” At that moment we all started to laugh because we never thought Alexa would scold us for our English.

Faith Journey: I think it was during this time that I experienced my biggest faith struggle so far; it was a time of questions, loneliness and fears. But even in all of that I was able to find answers from God, I was able to know a part of him that I could not have experienced anywhere else, and today I can say it was worth it because I continue to grow every day in my relationship with God and it is amazing.

Career/Professional Development: My time here has helped me develop my skills as a manager by having to work with volunteers and business models that are different from those I had in my country. It has been interesting to be in an organization that already has a working structure like Ten Thousand Villages and to start developing a new thrift store, recognizing all the factors that are needed to start. I’ve also been able to get new ideas about organizational processes.

New Perspectives: During this time, I learned to understand myself better and to know what I am capable of doing even in solitude or at a distance from my community—but always depending on God and trusting him.

Future Plans: My plans after I return to Mexico are still not very clear but my goal is to get a job where I’m passionate about it and can help more people. I don’t want to continue working just to survive. At the same time, I want to start looking for opportunities to start a handicraft company to support indigenous groups in Mexico. I also want to integrate back into my church and continue working with the youth group, and maybe help a little more in preaching.



Daniel Otoide (Nigeria)
Refugee Services Case Specialist,
Della Lamb Community Services
Kansas City, Missouri



First Impression or Differences:

One thing I am used to seeing in my country are traffic wardens. But coming here I realized the job of controlling traffic, which is done mostly by humans in Nigeria, is done by red, orange, and green lights here, and there is orderliness on the roads. Most people are

respectful and polite on the road. Also, most roads run from north to south, and east to west, rather than as the topography permits.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Getting to visit and walk on two world famous bridges: the Brooklyn Bridge in New York and the Golden Gate Bridge in California.

Faith Journey: Not having the kind of faith community I am used to was quite challenging, but it helped my personal growth and connection to God. Things I usually do with people are/were done alone. This helped me discover more ways to build my faith, like appreciating God in nature, introspection and prayer.

Career/Professional Development: Service with an organization that offers social services has in so many ways built my capacity and potential and opened my eyes to the need for social work. People are in despair, they need hope; people are broken, they need healing; people have been wronged and unjustly treated, peace needs to be made. There are vacuums/issues in various aspects of society that need to be filled/addressed. My goal/hope is to have a platform to practice things learned here and help solve problems in my little way.

New Perspectives: Every person, culture and country are unique, but even in our differences, there’s need to make sure we don’t lose our humanity—that is one thing that binds us.

Future Plans: Find, partner and work with organizations focused on community development and peace. Pass along experiences, lessons and skills in (church) youth groups and other social gatherings.

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Monica Raharjo *(Indonesia)*

Communication Assistant, Mennonite Women USA
Elkhart, Indiana

First Impression or Differences: I was really nervous



the first time I met with the other IVEPers, my host family and new people over here. Turns out I was wrong; there's no need to be nervous because everyone I met here was really nice, kind and amazing. Next, in my country, I can go anywhere any time I want, so I was surprised when I

found out that in the area where I live there is no public transportation. I have to depend on my host family; but, no worries, they always take me wherever I need to go.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Canning food with my host. Sledding and tobogganing with the other IVEPers. My first time riding a roller coaster, it was fun but scary.

Faith Journey: I struggled the first two months of this program. A lot of things happened, everything is new, but I believe God is always the same. Pray and read the Bible, that's what makes all the problems solved. Sometimes God uses people around us to help us, so be a good listener.

Career/Professional Development: I learned a lot from my work place. Mennonite Women USA is full of amazing people who really care about others, especially women. Sharing is a new skill that I learned; to be able to share what we know, what we have, we can do it, even though it's not easy.

New Perspectives: Different doesn't mean we are not the same. I can see a lot of similarities in diversity.

Future Plans: The first thing I will do after I return to my country is start some business with my sister. If we succeed, we can help others or open up job opportunities for others. And I want to learn more about "peace and relief."

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Stefanny Sierra Mendoza *(Colombia)*

Thrift Shop and Material Resources Administrative
Assistant, MCC West Coast/Nearly New Thrift Shop
Reedley, California

First Impression or Differences:



My first impression about the U.S. is that people transform their environment to survive in it; but in Colombia, we learn how to adapt to the environment to live. I was excited when I arrived in Akron and surprised because it's a very quiet place. I come from

a big and noisy city, and I am not used to quiet places. I also noticed that most people I met were gentle, and everybody was welcoming. In Reedley, I was impressed because it is a small but modern town where you can find everything, completely different from some towns in Colombia where some of them still don't have internet service. Still, you can find beautiful landscapes and have a peaceful rest. Reedley is known as "The world's fruit basket" because it is an agricultural city, growing mainly fruit and vegetables. I am grateful to God for choosing this place. I was worried before coming here; I had heard that it is not easy to find fruits or vegetables in the USA, but I have a different experience.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I think everything has been memorable since I started this experience, including bad moments. A specific experience was with my host mom when she took me to know other places; we always got lost on the way. I don't know why and how; it always happened. But I am glad I got lost with her and not by myself. I cannot imagine that scenario, lost in a foreign country when sometimes I do not understand everything or where everything is different. But thanks to that, we had the opportunity to know other places and incredible landscapes and enjoyed God's creation.

Faith Journey: It was a big challenge for me to be far from my country. I never expected how difficult it could be, but thanks to God, who supported me all this time, I learned to walk in faith every day and understand that I can't do anything without God. Since I arrived, I have been blessed through his glory and mercy; everywhere I find myself, God has placed people to look out for me, which is an immense treasure.

Career/Professional Development: I improved my English skills. I have the opportunity to learn different things serving in the Nearly New MCC Thrift shop, Quilt Center and the Material Resources Center. I admire all the volunteers and coworkers that I met because I learned something new from them when they shared part of their experiences. Furthermore, one of the new skills I am impressed with is sewing. I never in my life have

sewed something; for me, it is an art and I used to think it was impossible for me, but I did it. You need to be constant and patient. I learned how to manage a store, respond to customer needs, process donations, package some MCC kits, run the register, and other skills on the professional side. And finally, I learned the importance to continue serving and helping others as Jesus did.

New Perspectives: My new perspective is that we are all creations of God. God’s creation is diverse and multicultural, and in the diversity lies the beauty of our humanity. That’s how my view of myself and others has changed.

Future Plans: I had the opportunity to share with some missionaries and volunteers, and I am sure I want to study theology now. I will continue with my professional studies, improve my new skills, learn another language and, of course, come back to my church and continue my service. I want to be more involved in some social projects and find a job.

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Tri Sumarni (Indonesia)

Indonesian Language Tutor, Goshen College
and Teacher Assistant, Bethany Christian School
Goshen, Indiana



First Impression or Differences: My first impression was of a different atmosphere in education from Indonesia. When I went to my workplace for the first time, I saw that the classroom setup was different from the classroom setup in my country. They had a small library area, the wall was full with

students’ work and motivational writing. The students and teachers did not use uniforms. I learned what a comfortable class is and the way to appreciate students’ work, and how to always remain inspiring with letters on the wall.

Memorable or Funny Experience: All things with my host family and other IVEPers (Monica, Ritika and Angel) are memorable for me. I spent a lot of time with them. From taking care of each other, sharing love, cooking, going to new places, watching movies and Korean drama, learning, telling stories, meeting new people, playing games, being part of a big family, complaining, laughing, crying and others. They thought of me as their Indonesian daughter and their sister. It was a deep relationship with my host family and friends. One thing that I couldn’t forget, when we had dinner together, I made an Indonesian dessert called *Kue Putri Mandi*. It failed because I had never made it, then I just experimented with cheese inside. After that, when I cooked Indonesian

food, my host family and friends just asked, “Did you put cheese inside?” Then we laughed together.

Faith Journey: I am grateful for being a part of IVEP this year. I never thought that I would go to another country, and it was the USA with a different language, culture and weather. Wintertime was a surprise for me. I came from a hot country. It hurt when I felt very cold. I couldn’t play outside a lot. Because the sky was gray, the atmosphere was sad, dark, lazy, and at that time, my host grandparents and my real family had some health problems. They were sick because they had surgery and were positive for COVID and it was hard. Many disappointments arose because many plans had to be canceled. The change from being busy last semester and now having a lot of free time makes me struggle to actively do new things, with nail art, painting, coloring, working out, skiing and so on. Even though you do many things, you feel lacking, feel guilty because of your imperfections, accept criticism, even fall many times while doing activities outside. But God helped me to understand about all of the things that happen. When I felt bad, I just remembered God, talked with God, worshiped God, read the Bible; and God always remained with me, was always with me, giving suggestions through Scriptures that I read, worship songs. In this situation, learned a lot about making peace with yourself, receiving that “it is okay to not be okay” and being grateful for all these opportunities.

Career/Professional Development: Working in a private school is a plus to get a lot of knowledge, in terms of the quality of learning and getting to know the facilities used to support the teaching and learning process. I learned a lot about teaching strategies, methodologies, managing the classroom, and knowing how to deal with children who need special attention or the way to teach students especially in math, art and language arts.

New Perspectives: The new perspective is that IVEP makes the world small. People meet from different countries and relate to each other. It makes us a family. In the USA, I stayed with a nice host family. I learned that a real family is when we support, appreciate and care for one another. All of that can create love, positive thinking, self-confidence and harmonious relationships. I changed my perspective that not only woman can stay in the kitchen and clean all of the things, but also men and boys have a responsibility to do that.

Future Plans: My future plans are that I want to be a teacher and apply what I learned here and serve in the Mennonite church where I grew up in Sunday school, young adults and youth. Also, I will also look for a scholarship for a master’s of education. I want to study again and improve my education. I hope that I can stay in my village and build a private school there, so that I can stay in my village, near my family, serve in my own church and facilitate the neighborhoods kids’ education.

Blessing

Because God protects me and gave me many things this year.

(Omar Yesid Borja Perera, IVEP, Colombia to USA)

Energetic

Throughout my IVEP term, I have done all the new things with all the energy that God gives me every day. I use my energy to stay faithful with many differences, cultural differences, learn new things, meet new people, build relationships with God, find new experiences, go to new places, try something new and spend time to know who I am.

(Tri Sumarni, IVEP, Indonesia to USA)

Exploration

This year is, for me, a year of exploration, a year that allowed me to discover myself more and mature my aspirations.

(Christian Berambaye Nawai, Chad to USA)

Grace

God blessed me in different ways and took care of me all the time.

(Stefanny Sierra Mendoza, IVEP, Colombia to USA)

Growth

I grew in a new way of looking at life, in my relationship with God and in my relationships with others.

(Miguel “Angel” Neri Carbot, IVEP, Mexico to USA)

Happiness

Met such wonderful people, learned a lot of things, found a new family...how can I not be happy?

(Monica Raharjo, IVEP, Indonesia to USA)

Journey

It was a priceless and spectacular journey to look into people’s lives and make my life more perfect through the various people I met.

(Hyojae Kwak, IVEP, Republic of Korea to USA)

Lonely

Coming from a big family most of my days were quiet and did not have a lot of activities—that projected loneliness to me.

(Ayibongwe “Thandeka” Ncube, IVEP, Zimbabwe to USA)

Mercy

Simply because God has been merciful enough for me in this and past years. Keeping us safe from COVID-19 and everything, keeping my family in Mozambique safe, other country and friends safe, my hosts and everyone I knew here also safe. I just give thanks to him for all he has done in my life. All the travels from Mozambique to here and to different places in the USA, he was with me always. So, yes: gratitude for his mercy and kindness. Glory be to God.

(Placido Messelela, IVEP, Mozambique to USA)

New Perspectives

I got a new perception of life and a new connection with people for future relationships or bridges between my country and the U.S. New skills of work and worship, which can help myself and the brethren.

(Luís Magopeia, IVEP, Mozambique to USA)

Peacebuilding

Such tremendous diversity here can exist free and comfortable because of peacebuilding processes and healthy dialogue between different ages, religions, gender and ethnic groups

(Oleksandr “Alex” Kachkovskiy, IVEP, Ukraine to USA)

Roller coaster

I enjoyed the highs and grew from the lows.

(Daniel Otoide, IVEP, Nigeria to USA)

Roller coaster

I have felt all emotions intensely.

(Rufaro Manyureni, IVEP, Zimbabwe to USA)

Strong

Recently I have lost my mom. Even after having a hard time, I chose to complete this program.

(Juliet Dias, IVEP, Bangladesh to USA)

Wild

Growing wildly for and with God. A seed came out of its comfort zone, entering the lavish jungle, survived, received sunlight, darkness, thunder, rain, snow and wind. It's a way to grow, stand steadily, sowed and reaped God, Christ and the fruits of the Spirit.

(Ritika Khati, IVEP, Nepal to USA)

SALT



John "Colin" Caisley



Autumn Chandler



Ranita DiMarco



Erika Enomoto



Hannah Alida Geurkink



Anna Herning



Sarah Janzen



Olivia Knull



**Lynette
Madrigal-Granados**



Rebecca McKague



Kathryn "Kate" Nieuwsma



Joefin Milred Peter



Annie Serez



Ben Stutzman

SALT



Kathryn Swartz



Clara Unzicker



**Charles "Charlie"
Welch Jr.**

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John “Colin” Caisley (USA)

Peacebuilding Assistant,
Grassroots Development Initiatives Foundation
Kisumu, Kenya



First Impression or Differences:

Walking in public in Kisumu, one’s privacy and personal space are not valued as highly as in the States, but community and relationships are valued much more highly. This was a hard change at first but now it’s a difference I really appreciate.

Memorable or Funny Experience: All the opportunities to surprise people with strange phrases in their language. “Twende ujaze tumbo” means “Let’s go fill the stomach.” “Abiro ywayo tiki” means “I’m going to pull that beard of yours.”

Faith Journey: We were never meant to experience God on our own. The Christian faith is a journey that’s undertaken as a community or not at all. I really struggled at the beginning of the year, feeling isolated and distant from the Lord. It was an essential turning point to realize how God moves in the world through His followers.

Career/Professional Development: Similar to all aspects of life here, I’ve felt the importance of involving everyone in the process.

New perspectives: I want to have less money. It makes you a slave. I want to be more honest in my church community and do the work of challenging ideas I don’t agree with and having my ideas challenged.

Future plans: I think I’m going to drive down to Texas, see family that I have been out of the loop with for a while. I want to get more involved in my church, to take relationships with church members more seriously. Might go to nursing school?

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Autumn Chandler (USA)

Educational Assistant, Stansberry Ministries /
Hogar de Niños
Santa Cruz, Bolivia



First impression or differences:

The entire culture of Bolivia is just way more relaxed than in the States. In the U.S. you constantly have to be working or doing things outside of your job or being productive. Here in Bolivia, there is way more of an emphasis on rest. Even some rules and protocols are just way

more relaxed here. For example, when we were in the bus terminal leaving for a trip, we did not have all the information we needed to successfully board the bus, even after we bought the ticket. You would think the bus company would tell you, you need a ticket for your luggage and you have to take your own luggage down, but we didn’t figure that out until five minutes before our bus left. Sometimes I love how laid-back it is here, but sometimes it can be a little stressful.

Memorable or funny experience: My family really likes to go out and do things on the weekends together. Usually we will go to my host tia’s house or a park, and I have to say, every weekend is pretty fun for me. I’ve even taken a couple of trips with my fellow YALTERs to see the rest of Bolivia, but I think the most memorable thing happened in my bedroom in my host mom’s house. It was Christmas Eve, and it was around midday so no one was doing anything except sleeping, and I was watching movies in my bed. Suddenly my host sister’s daughter (who is four years old) runs into my room yelling, “What are you doing?????” She has a lot of energy. She saw I was watching a movie and wanted to watch one with me, so she just crawled up into my bed with me, and we picked a movie to watch and relaxed together. It was so sweet and I loved just having that time with her, just the two of us to hang out.

Faith Journey: I’m not going to lie, this year has been a challenge. Connecting with a church and community that is not in my first language has been super hard for me. My pastor is actually from the States originally too so that’s made it a little easier to listen to him speak, but still very challenging. However, I really appreciate the community aspect of my new church. A couple weekends ago, we all went to a pool together to baptize some of our members, but afterwards we all got to swim together. It was just a great way to feel connected with the church without the pressure of having to listen and understand a lot of Spanish.

Career/Professional Development: I partially picked this assignment in Bolivia because I would get to work with children. And these kids have taught me A LOT so far. Even though my patience has been tested over and over again, I still really want to work with kids in the future because of how rewarding it is. Even when I have one good day in a week, that one day makes it worth all the struggle.

New Perspectives: I always say I didn't really have any expectations about what the people, the culture, or Bolivia in general would be like before I came. And I didn't. I knew it was going to be different from anything I could imagine. But one thing I've come to realize is that it's not like a different planet. People will be people wherever you go. It doesn't matter if they don't speak the same language as you or grew up in a completely different place. People are generally the same, and whether that's comforting or scary, I've found it to be true.

Future Plans: When I return home, I'm starting college! I'm going to Chestnut Hill College near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and I will be an early childhood education major. I'm super excited to apply what I learned with these kids here in Bolivia to kids in the U.S. I also would love to use my Spanish when I go back. I would love to be a Spanish teacher or tutor at some point in my life.

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Ranita DiMarco (USA)

Early Childhood Teacher, Sandra Jones Centre
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe



First Impression or Differences: Before I came here someone told me that cities in Africa are basically the same as cities in the U.S. My first impression of Bulawayo was that it looked nothing like a U.S. city. I think one big difference was the roads. They are way wider than roads in the U.S. When I came they were in really bad shape but they ended up getting repaired later. I think another difference was "Africa time." Anytime I was waiting to be picked up I could always assume the person picking me up would be at least a half an hour after the time they said they were coming. That was an adjustment because I'm used to always getting places ten minutes early.

Memorable or Funny Experience: One memorable experience was when I traveled to Zambia by myself on a bus. The conductor on the bus asked me where I was from, and I said the U.S. His response was "Hola" which I thought was funny. I tried to explain to him that I spoke English, but I don't think he understood. Later

when I was waiting to get a bus back to Bulawayo from Zambia, a big group of men approached me and were all trying to talk to me at once. I automatically turned to them and said "Hablas español?" They all looked at me weirdly but got the message and walked away.

Faith Journey: Something that strengthened my faith was joining a Bible study with the girls I lived with. They were all from different areas outside of the city and were staying at the center while attending a vocational school teaching them to farm. Most of them were older than me and didn't speak good English. I was really intimidated by them. One day I decided to work up the courage to join their Bible study and I'm really glad I did. They were always praising God and thanking him for giving them the opportunity to come here and learn. It made me realize how lucky I was to be able to come to Zimbabwe for a whole year to learn and grow and help others.

Career/Professional Development: Before coming here I was fairly certain I wanted to be a teacher but being here made me realize I definitely don't want to teach preschool but also, I don't want to teach older kids either. A skill that this experience has taught me was patience because I felt like I was always having to repeat myself because a couple kids weren't listening or someone came in late or something.

New Perspectives: One new perspective I have is how lucky we are to be able to eat so many different foods and not have a staple food. Where I lived in Bulawayo, we ate the same four meals every week. In rural areas it's not uncommon for kids to not eat meat until they're a teenager

Future Plans: My future plans are to work as a server at a restaurant while trying to figure out what I want to study in college. I had hoped that coming here would help me figure that out. While it did help a bit, I'm still not sure.

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Erika Enomoto (USA)

Food Security Project Assistant, Fundación San Lucas /
La Mariposa
Jinotepe, Carazo, Nicaragua



First Impression or Differences: It's been interesting to notice the difference in food between Nicaragua and California. The food in Nicaragua is generally prepared with more oil, contains significantly fewer vegetables (especially dark leafy greens), and every meal is served with juice or soda.

Memorable or Funny Experience: The MCC Nicaragua and Honduras team retreat in February was a memorable trip because there was so much beautiful nature around us. But mostly because I got to spend time with Beatriz and Elda (YAMENers serving in Honduras) in person for the first time since the local orientation that was held during my first week in Nicaragua.

Faith Journey: I've had a lot of struggles with my host family's church. I learned I feel quite drained from evangelical church services. Christmas was especially difficult. I'm very thankful that I have been able to join my home church in California through Zoom every once in a while. Halfway through my service term, I started visiting different Mennonite churches in Nicaragua, which has been an enjoyable experience.

Career/Professional Development: I have learned that often times, it is more important to invest in relationships rather than simply getting tasks done on a checklist. My time with Fundación San Lucas has also solidified my desire to work in the area of food security and healthy food access (especially through growing food).

New Perspectives: For a long time, I thought that I needed to work on being more flexible and adaptable, but I learned that sometimes I'm too flexible and that it's important to set healthy boundaries. I feel that I've grown a lot through my experience with SALT in Nicaragua.

Future Plans: For the rest of the summer, I plan on working as kitchen staff at Camp Keola in California. I also plan on volunteering at a local community garden and training for a marathon, but I'm not sure what's next after that. I hope I remember the importance of slowing down and meaningful relationship building when I'm back in a fast-paced environment.

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Hannah Alida Geurkink (Canada)
Donor Relations Associate, Refuge Egypt
Cairo, Egypt



First Impression or Differences: The vastness of the city! I have lived and visited large cities before, but something about this one shook me and continues to surprise me.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I got the chance to go on an amazing hike. This was such a unique experience and something I'll remember fondly for a long time.

Faith Journey: I think this time has helped me to really think about what is most important for me in my personal faith. It has also taught me a lot about intersectionality. I have enjoying seeing this play out in life in comparison to simply reading about it.

Career/Professional Development: Over my time, I did a wide variety of assignments. I think it has taught me a lot about what I actually enjoy doing and what I am less passionate about. I hope to be able to continue using some of these skills and things I have learned in the future.

New Perspectives: I have learned to be a lot more flexible, especially when it comes to time. Along with this, I am trying to become less fixed in my ways and continue to grow myself.

Future Plans: This is something I am still trying to figure out. However, I am really looking forward to sharing my experience with everyone back home.

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Anna Herning (USA)

Communications Assistant, Wi'am Centre for Conflict Resolution / Al-Malath Charitable Society
Beit Sahour and Bethlehem, Palestine and Israel



First Impression or Differences: People in my host community are much more willing to go out of their way to help friends, family or visitors than people in the U.S. usually are.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Trying to corral chickens for the first time!

Faith Journey: I've learned how to use my gifts in a church context differently from how I use my gifts in a work context. I've also realized how important community is for staying focused in my spiritual life. That part has been both a site of success and of challenge and shortcoming at various times over my SALT term.

Career/Professional Development: My SALT assignment has made me realize how important it is for me to be doing work that has a strong sense of purpose, not just having a job because I have to or because I'm good at a certain thing. It's made me think that I might be doing more NGO work than I imagined before.

New Perspectives: I've started to see myself as more adventurous than before. I am an introvert, and don't usually like taking risks, but my SALT term has forced me out of my comfort zone many, many times. I've been

able to do lots of really amazing things and make good friends through it.

Future Plans: I realized that I REALLY like having variety in my work and doing lots of random tasks alongside the main job. Wherever I go next, I want to bring some of that willingness for the unanticipated. I want a job that has freedom to keep switching things up, not a “specialty” job.

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Sarah Janzen *(Canada)*

Emergency Response Assistant, MCC Lebanon,
Syria, Iraq
Beirut, Lebanon



First Impression or Differences:

You never know what to expect when arriving at a new country, let alone one in the middle of multiple crises. In the end, there were new things to get used to, but I think it was easier because all of Lebanon was adjusting to the changing local situation at the same time. I

was actually surprised at how comfortable, and almost familiar, Beirut felt early on. The biggest surprise for me was adjusting to the generator schedule because of electricity cuts. On the first night, we waited a few hours for power so we could use the elevator to move our suitcases. It turns out that elevators are pretty important when buildings are built upwards rather than outwards! But I quickly got used to taking stairs and always keeping my phone nearby for the flashlight.

Memorable or Funny Experience: In November I participated in a conference that MCC hosted to conclude a three-year peacebuilding project. Partners from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan all piled into buses to visit different partners in Lebanon and discuss what they had learned from the various expressions of this project. The discussions were in Arabic so I didn’t understand much, but I did learn to recognize some different Arabic dialects. At one point, I thought the conversation had turned into an argument and I was confused why no one was trying to de-escalate it. When I asked what was going on, it turned out that people were just passionately describing their project! I was so grateful to participate with everyone, and it was a good reminder that Arabic can be such a passionate language.

Faith Journey: This year has been full of faith conversations since history and politics are intricately tied to religion in Lebanon. I’ve learned a lot about religious diversity through conversations with friends, at work, and through classes on Islam and Eastern Churches. I usually find more similarities than differences. One difference I am working to understand is the lavishness (as I often view it) of Eastern Church buildings and traditions. However, at a Christmas concert in an Armenian Catholic Cathedral, I looked around to finally realize that what I might have previously viewed as outdated and frivolous, actually has a grandeur and majesty that exceeds my understanding.

Career/Professional Development: One unexpected skill I developed was being able to tell (by the beeps, time of day, lights or sounds) what power system we were on. Because of the electricity crisis, we were constantly switching between government power, generators and UPS batteries. I think, and hope, that this specific skill won’t be required in future jobs! More practically, I learned more about how non-profits function and set priorities. By working on both administrative and program tasks, I saw the constant challenge to balance the requirements of funders, partners and beneficiaries. I prefer administrative work and love to balance that out with seeing how programs run. There can be so much joy amidst all the hard work!

New Perspectives: This year has often required changing my expectations: about the availability of resources, the electricity schedule, government involvement, and what I’ll do or learn or experience. For example, I often wanted to follow the COVID-19 guidelines I learned in Canada, but the expectations in Lebanon are different. As a coworker and friend put it, “You’re in Lebanon, be in Lebanon,” so I learned to adjust my expectations. I’m also learning that no matter how much you change your expectations, there is always a place for hope. I think there is a difference between hoping or striving for something and expecting it.

Future Plans: I want to do administrative work with a non-profit after SALT. I hope that the variety of work and experiences from this year will continue to remind me that my actions make a difference and that I can tackle whatever comes my way. I’m curious to explore how I will share stories, pictures, meals and lessons I’ve learned this year, and how this experience will continue to shape me!

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Olivia Knull (*Canada*)

Development Assistant, Peace and Development Network
Kigali, Rwanda



First Impression or Differences: You are able to buy most things that you need from small businesses. It is so refreshing not having to go to a corporation for basic needs, like toothbrushes or fruit. Instead, you can support local and it doesn't break the bank! People are so much more flexible with color coordination and patterns—I love LOVE wearing kitenge dresses and skirts. In Canada I have always been considered a little bit “quirky” for my colorful outfits—here I'm considered stylish!

Memorable or Funny Experience: I have had the pleasure of attending two Rwandan weddings, which are usually divided into three sections: The “Gusaba” (a traditional “negotiation and meeting” ceremony), the church ceremony, and the reception. March 2022 marked my first opportunity to wear a “mushanana”, which is a traditional Rwandan dress. The bride was the sister of my host mother and when I arrived, she surprised me by inviting me to be part of the bridal escort, which precedes the bride wearing matching mushanana to the Gusaba. I was so surprised and excited to be part of the ceremony, even though I had no idea what I was supposed to do! Everything went well and it is certainly an experience that I will not soon forget.

Faith Journey: (Trigger warning, mentioning the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis)

It is one thing to learn about the way that colonialism and Christian/Catholic missions have negatively impacted global communities, and an entirely other thing to see these impacts in person. Few people realize that the historic Rwandan terms “Hutu” and “Tutsi” were not originally considered an ethnic division—as many will claim today, but more accurately (although not a perfect comparison), a class or career distinction (it is now illegal in the country to ask about or classify oneself using these terms). It was the Catholic White Fathers and Belgian colonists that created, enforced, and institutionalized these divisions in such a way that started the path towards the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis. Moreover, during this tragic event, churches were not places of refuge, but locations of betrayal and bloodshed. It has been profound to witness how Christians reconcile their history in this country and continue to turn to and seek God in both high and low moments. Currently, Rwanda is an incredibly peaceful country that reflects God's desire for human beings to forgive one another and work together in community.

Career/Professional Development: As much as I loved studying culture and development in university, nothing compares to being able to witness the work in practice. My favorite part was helping develop log frames and the indicators therein. I am a huge data nerd and have enrolled to start my masters of monitoring and evaluation in May!

New Perspectives: I feel like I better understand the way that my home country emphasizes productivity over humanity, if you are not making money and pushing long hours—you feel less valuable. On the other hand, in my workplace in Rwanda, if I tried to show up to work after telling someone I was sick or worn out, they would insist that I stay home. Even though hard work and ambition are valued here, it isn't at the cost of my mental or physical health.

Future Plans: I am hoping to stay in Rwanda for at least another year, during which I will continue to work and work on my masters on the weekends. After that year we will see what happens! I have no intention of moving back to the area that I came from (Vancouver area) because I feel like that season has passed. Perhaps I will explore Ottawa or even spend some time in Europe.

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Lynette Madrigal-Granados (*USA*)

Migrant Shelter Support Worker, Casa del Migrante
Guatemala City, Guatemala



First Impression or Differences: First impressions of Guatemala City were how huge and modern of a city it is. Equipped with huge metropolitan areas and a well working metro system. Major differences for me were the lack of spicy food and spicy snacks that I am accustomed to in Mexico and

the U.S. People walk everywhere. Host families enjoy conversating and will talk until the late hours of the night!

Memorable or Funny Experience: This one time I was running up a “pasarela” (footbridge) to catch the bus in time, when I suddenly missed a step and struck my shin against one of the steps leaving my whole right leg feeling numb. It hurt so bad, and I contemplated just going back home. Surely this was a bad omen! What made it worse was the fact that once I got to the bottom of the footbridge, I found the bus driver waiting for me and signaled me to run and hop on. As I look back at this experience, I can't help but laugh. To this day, that is the only time a bus has waited for me. HAHA!

Faith Journey: Major highlights include experiencing the love of God for all people through the migrants, as well as witnessing altruism, their love, and care for one another. Difficulties include compassion fatigue, and finding God in the midst of all the noise and hustle and bustle.

Career/Professional Development: I learned how to equip and onboard migrants who are on their journey north. Also learned of all the different organizations that come together to help and assist migrants on their journeys.

New Perspectives: Cultural identity. Discovering I am more American than I had originally thought, since it has seeped through in my relationships and work. Embracing being Mexican-American, or Chicana. New appreciation for the Mennonite churches across the globe.

Future Plans: Legal work surrounding immigration. I have dreams to someday enter law school or open a non-profit that will serve marginalized communities. This experience has given me an opportunity to explore that.

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Rebecca McKague *(Canada)*

Environmental Care Program Assistant, Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research
San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico



First Impression or Differences: Felt overwhelmed by all the noise, taxis honking, people and things happening in the streets and markets. I couldn't believe how many stairs we had to climb to get up to my house. It's good exercise and I love the view from up there of the colorful houses on the mountain.

Memorable or Funny Experience: My Spanish teacher and I had a lot of good times talking, cooking, going to church, laughing. Eating enchiladas de mole for Christmas Eve with the family. We used Canadian napkins designed with red and black checks and moose and bear images. They really liked the napkins from Canada. Some even joked they wanted to keep their napkin as a souvenir—mole stains and all! It was a simple thing but was really special that they included a little something from Canada at the table. Hangouts with the one-and-a-half-year-old in my house. She was a gift from God and really cheered me up, especially on lonely days. When I yelled at the neighbor's dogs for entering the nursery where the MCC partner grows the trees. I definitely scared the dogs and they got out of there pretty fast. I had to protect the trees and the seeds like they were my babies. Plus, I think I released all my emotions

that I hadn't been able to express for months in my second language. My Mexican co-workers were surprised about how direct I was. They said, "You kicked those dogs out like a Canadian!!"

Faith Journey: Included learning about God's protection, presence, and love for me. Psalm 121 and Romans 8:35-39.

Career/Professional Development: My SALT placement combined three of my interests: learning Spanish, caring for the environment, and mission work through a Christian organization. I'd like to continue working in these areas and SALT gave me experience and provided opportunities to help me see how I might combine these interests in future work.

Future Plans: I am considering going to Bible college. I want to form a little hangout group at home to keep practicing Spanish with Spanish speakers that I know in my hometown. I really hope to return to Mexico again!

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Kathryn "Kate" Nieuwsma *(USA)*

Monitoring and Evaluation Project Assistant,
Centre for Peace and Nationhood (CPN)
Nairobi, Kenya



First Impression or Differences: Driving on the other side of the road, red dirt and flowering trees, lots of people and kiosks, and music blasting at all times. Ugali is a must in any meal, and it makes no sense to them that people in the U.S. don't have a real staple food or a concrete definition of what

American food would even really be. I found out quickly that thanking Kenyans often makes them uncomfortable, and compliments are unexpected. Most Kenyans can debate almost anything at the drop of a hat. They laugh hard and often. They enjoy today and don't worry about tomorrow.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Most of my best memories are with my four-year-old host brother Tendayi. He hangs up my laundry after washing and every week comes to my bedroom door to tell me it's time to clean my room. One of my favorite moments with him occurred one evening after I came home from work. He grabbed my face with both hands, kissed me on the forehead, and looked deep into my eyes. With his nose touching my nose, he then declared, "You are my Lamborghini!" When I stopped laughing and asked him why, he said, "Because you are so fast, you are so new, you are so shiny, you are soooo beautiful!" He melts my heart.

Faith Journey: Working in Mathare has been a spiritual struggle. Poverty, abandonment, substance abuse, violence and corruption is hard to see and harder to understand. Why do people have to live in these circumstances while I spend some time here and get to jet back home to a faraway comfortable life? It brings guilt and also a motivation to live out Luke 12:48 which says “to whom much is given, much will be expected.”

Career/Professional Development: Understanding the challenges of fieldwork and the daily struggles of the project participants has added great value to how I do my job. Being the one person in the room that doesn't understand fully what's going on (usually due to the language barrier) has humbled me professionally. I aspire to remember the feeling of being the odd one out and in the future, seek out those who may feel similarly. As a direct result of spending time this year with the participants, promoters, and the staff of CPN, I would like to be in the development and health world in some capacity.

New Perspectives: I have realized how rushed and impatient I am, and the role my home culture has pushed me in being so. How sometimes eagerness ruins things and many situations can be solved more easily with calm reserve. I have learned that not being comfortable most of the time is almost addicting. Having challenges to overcome, whether it be how to get somewhere new, or maneuvering around a language barrier, or accomplishing a task in a new work culture, can be both the most frustrating and the most exhilarating thing. I have felt community in a new way—through sympathetic smiles of participants who cannot easily communicate with me, little children's hands in mine, and video calls from the other side of the globe. I have seen new parts of myself and appreciated solitude in a way I never have before.

Future Plans: At this time, I'm looking into doing a master's program in public health or health and development. This has been influenced by my desire to specialize in a field within international development as well as my time spent in Kenya working in maternal and child health. Realizing how integral health is and seeing firsthand the immense challenges of accessing health care in places like Mathare is motivation to be a part of programs that bridge that gap.

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Joefin Peter (*Canada*)

Peacebuilding and Disaster Response Assistant,
a local peacebuilding partner
Beirut, Lebanon



First Impression or Differences:

I had expected Lebanon to be similar to the United Arab Emirates (because I grew up there), but I was surprised to find that it was a combination of the UAE and my experience of India. As a result, I have been able to navigate through my term using my knowledge from previous experiences in both these contexts.

Memorable or Funny Experience: In the beginning of our term, Sarah and I walked over to a restaurant that was recommended to us. We didn't find the restaurant's entrance right away and walked around a couple times before someone pointed it out to us. (I was already a little embarrassed.) We sat down and ordered things for the both of us to share. Our drinks arrived first, and we had ordered “jalab”. As the waiter walked towards us, I noticed the drink had nuts in it and a spoon. As he set it down, I went, “Ooh, what do you think the sticks are for?” (Like most things in Lebanon, I was expecting this drink to also be an experience.) Sarah then goes, “You mean the straws?” Unbeknownst to me, the brown, cylindrical “sticks” that I saw were hollow and had holes on either end. Sarah and I had a hearty laugh about this and have brought it up a few times during our term.

Faith Journey: I struggle to see where God is in the midst of the suffering here in Lebanon and Syria. Every time I write a proposal or report, everything just keeps getting worse. It helps for me to reframe it as God is in the people I encounter and in all the emotions they exhibit. Even that is a temporary fix because we go past and ignore children and adults who beg every day. This has been extremely tough for me. I can't help but think about what Jesus said in Matthew 25:35-46 and I am most definitely not helping those who are hungry, thirsty, or naked. I can't help but think about how privileged I am and I constantly question if I am being selfish. Something a local staff at MCC told me was to remember that it helps that Sarah and I are willing to be here and essentially what we can do is chip away at the problem instead of feeling like we have to carry a mountain. I have always thought about chipping away as volunteering, being passionate about and advocating for social justice issues, and understanding that my role as a Christian is to aid society. Even that has left me questioning why God is letting things happen that are neither aiding His Kingdom, nor its peoples.

Career/Professional Development: I have learned to write narratively through writing proposals and reports. I have learned about places to research, i.e., ReliefWeb, for information that I can write about in this context. I am now skilled at running an Instagram account for an NGO and social media campaigns, i.e., 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. I continue to learn on Kaya Connect, but so far I have completed courses on safeguarding, diaspora humanitarian training, gender issues in humanitarian action, project management, and proposal and report writing. Indirectly, I have learned about the importance of having a work-life balance and about work dynamics. I also have learned how important the work environment and rapport are to me and this is definitely something I will look for in future professional settings.

New Perspectives: Being in Lebanon while the “Freedom Convoy” took place in Canada was very frustrating and slightly frightening for me. It highlighted the level of privilege, entitlement, and racism present for some people in Canada. Not that I was oblivious to the issues in Canada before coming Lebanon, but people in Lebanon see it as a utopia. I realized that this goes to show that compared to Lebanon and Syria, Canada is better, but my home country can do with so much work.

Future Plans: I will be going back home to Surrey, B.C., and returning to school at Trinity Western University to upgrade my degree.

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Annie Serez *(Canada)*

Administrative Assistant, Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy
Palestine and Israel



First Impression or Differences: I had a unique experience where I got to live and serve both in Amman, Jordan, for five months, and in Ramallah, Palestine, for another five months as a result of border closures and political restrictions due to COVID-19. I made many friends in Amman

and had some incredible experiences through traveling with locals and celebrating local holidays together. When I moved to Palestine in January, I experienced quite a cultural shift even though the people are very similar and the countries are neighbors. My first impressions were very positive as everyone I met was extremely friendly and hospitable. The cultures of Jordan and Palestine are extremely hospitable and I spent many nights enjoying Arabic coffee in the warm nights of the city as well as the cool of the desert.

Memorable or Funny Experience: There was a period of time where my host mom had a cold. So one day I tried to ask her if I could make her a cup of tea with ginger. However, when I tried to Google Translate the word “ginger” in Arabic, I unknowingly typed the word “finger” instead. So, still unaware, I repeatedly practiced the word until I felt confident saying it out loud. I then confidently walked up to my host mom and asked her if she wanted “tea with a finger?” in Arabic. She looked at me confused and said “shou?” (what?). Thinking that maybe I maybe wasn’t pronouncing the word properly, I repeated myself, but this time slower and more clearly. “Do you want teaaa... with a finger...?” She looked at me and smiled, then said “No thank you.” I said “are you sure?” She chuckled and nodded. So, I walked away and made myself a tea. It wasn’t until later on in the day when I pulled out my Google Translate again that I saw the last translated word was “finger.”

Faith Journey: The beginning of the year was an incredible test of patience and an extremely humbling experience for me. Due to the ever-evolving COVID-19 restrictions of 2021, I ended up in a country that was not my original country of placement, with no work, in a long waiting game to cross the border from Jordan to Palestine. During that time of waiting, five months in total, I was faced with many emotional trials and frustrations as I had to navigate living temporarily day to day. In order to find peace and joy I had to let go of my own desires and expectations on a daily basis and press closer into God. It was a difficult struggle, but at the end of the day was incredibly rewarding as I felt God changing me and molding me further into the person that He wants me to be.

Career/Professional Development: The NGO that I am working with here in Ramallah aligns perfectly with my own personal values and career goals. I am humbled to be working with such competent people who are meticulously striving for peace, political freedom, and women’s rights. I have had incredible opportunities to work with youth from marginalized communities and hear about their lived experiences under occupation. I have been privileged to be able to join political conferences and forums relating to peace and reconciliation. And I’ve been able to learn many skills regarding the inner workings of a humanitarian NGO.

New Perspectives: As much as I have loved this experience and I love the people and the culture where I am living, I have also gained a respect and appreciation for my own country. Despite the imperfection of all political systems and structures, I am increasingly grateful for the freedoms and rights that I hold as a woman living in Canada.

Future Plans: I hope to be able to go home and work with newcomer youth in the field of cultural integration. I have had a passion for intercultural learning and

integration for many years and would love to be able to create opportunities back home in Canada where my community can both welcome newcomers and learn from the rich cultural knowledge that they bring with them.

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Ben Stutzman (USA)

IT Intern, South Rwenzori Diocese
Kasese, Uganda



First Impression or Differences: I was happy to have a large host family and to be in such a cool location (at the foot of mountains and between national parks). A few differences were always sticking out as a white person, eating dinner at 9:00 each evening, and getting by without many modern conveniences. I never got used to the fact that the women in my host family did all the housework, while the men were served and seen as the clear heads of the household.

Memorable or Funny Experience: One of my best memories is learning the local language, Lukonjo, from my friend Jockim. It was the most casual class I've ever taken—we set up chairs in his yard and went over any questions I had thought of—and he had such a calm and enjoyable teaching style. When I didn't understand a new word, Jockim was great at demonstrating it with the materials around us. One day, I was trying to figure out what plant "epiripiri" was. I was thinking it might be a strawberry until he went and found some hot sauce for us to taste test!

Faith Journey: Faith was a bigger part of daily life than it has ever been for me, since I worked for a church and lived with parents who were very serious about their faith. A highlight was being exposed to new Christian denominations and learning about their different approaches to faith. Living in a totally different environment also showed me how much I struggle with greed and impatience which aren't as noticeable in my more comfortable life in the U.S. I was challenged to reconcile Jesus's hardline teachings like, "give to the one who asks," with realities like all the requests for money I received—what would He have done in my situation?

Career/Professional Development: As an IT intern, I really enjoyed the bigger projects like making a website and database for the church, for which I did a lot of Googling and learning. But I think the other half of my job, being available for general IT help, was the more important experience. It taught me how to stay calm when someone comes to me with a technology problem, and to give it my best shot even if I've never dealt with the specific issue before. This has made me more open to

general tech-support type jobs in the future—you never know what the day will bring, and it's a great feeling to help someone solve their problem!

New Perspectives: I think this year has taken my pride down a notch. Leaving my comfort zone has revealed some of my weaknesses, and seeing the disadvantages faced by many Ugandans has shown me how much of my "success" in life is only thanks to my fortunate background and upbringing. It's become easier to empathize with other people's hopes and struggles, and I hope I will maintain that empathy when I'm no longer surrounded by the more dramatic situations I've seen this year. Life in Uganda has made me more grateful for the wealth and government support we enjoy in the United States, but more critical of first-world countries' self-advancement while poorer countries struggle behind them. In terms of church, I gained more respect for Mennonites and their values of simple living and openness to working with other denominations.

Future Plans: I'm excited to see my family and friends, attend a couple of weddings, and eat peanut butter. I haven't made any career plans, but I will probably look for an IT-related job. I hope to become involved in a church and find a way to serve my community but will focus on doing a couple of things well instead of spreading myself too thin.

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Kathryn Swartz (USA)

Documentation Assistant, Daima Initiatives
for Peace and Development
Nairobi, Kenya



First Impression or Differences: Kenyan parents are often way more direct and demanding than American ones. Because I'm a weird hybrid of child and tenant, I still received a lot of this. "Bring me the knife," or "boil for me some water for washing." Never a please, or "would you mind?" All of my American individualism chafed, pouted and eventually (at least usually) acquiesced into a cheerful helpfulness.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I was leaving the hospital, limping slightly, with my host mom and 10-year-old host sister after getting another injection for malaria in my glutes. Angy, my host sister, has been sick a lot, and was holding my hand because she knew how painful the shots for malaria really were. "Angy," I said, "actually, it's my butt that hurts, not my hand. Would you mind holding it instead?" We both giggled all the way to the car, her hand on my butt. It did actually make it feel better.

Faith Journey: The amount of patience, self-compassion, and time sitting with myself throughout the pain and isolation of this year have given me a new bedrock to stand on. I know, on such a deeper level, that I am loved and held by the universe and all of our deepest interconnections. I only have such profound gratitude for that.

Career/Professional Development: I've recognized an affinity for teaching that has been slowly accumulating throughout my life, and knowing that my work through trauma, mental health, and body-based awareness education is where I will continue to find myself. While mental health may look different for different cultures, it's wonderful to remember that we all have bodies, and that may be the most basic connecting point for humanity the world over.

New Perspectives: I have a beautiful community full of love and friends and family back at home, and also throughout Kenya. I am capable, lovable, boundaried and boundless, with a very helpful intuition. Also, comfort is almost always optional.

“The opposite of samsara is when all the walls fall down, when the cocoon completely disappears and we are totally open to whatever may happen, with no withdrawing, no centralizing into ourselves. That is what we aspire to, the warrior's journey. That's what stirs us and inspires us: leaping, being thrown out of the nest, going through the initiation rites, growing up, stepping into something that's uncertain and unknown. From that point of view, death becomes this comfort and this security and this cocoon and this vitamin pill-ness. That's death. [. . .] When you find yourself with these old, familiar feelings off anxiety because your world is falling apart and you're not measuring up to your image of yourself and everyone is wrecking everything and you feel terrible about yourself and you don't like anybody else and your whole life is fraught with emotional misery and confusion and conflict, at that point just remember that you're going through all this emotional upheaval because your coziness has just been, in some small or large way, addressed. Basically, you do prefer life and warriorship to death.” —Pema Chödrön

Future Plans: I have plans to accept a photojournalism contract with the Medical Mission Sisters for documentation throughout their missions in East and West Africa; grad school in the next year or so; to snuggle my friends and family for a solid two weeks per person; to offer trauma education in public schools at home, and to advocate and work for a car-free downtown in Harrisonburg, VA.

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Clara Unzicker (USA)

Child and Youth Worker, Creciendo Juntos
Soacha, Colombia



First Impression or Differences: My most memorable first impression of Colombia and the culture in Bogotá was how welcoming the community was to me. I was surprised at how many people reached out to get to know me, learn about my culture, and make sure that I was having a good time with my host family and placement.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I have a young host cousin who lives in our apartment building and frequently visits to play games or talk. Recently, she has started trying to scare me every time she comes into our apartment, which is hilarious. Most of the time, I can hear her coming, but every once and a while, she really scares me good.

Faith Journey: I have enjoyed the opportunity to participate in my host family's church here. Growing up Mennonite, I have a lot of experiences with the Mennonite Church in the U.S., so seeing how a Mennonite church operates in Colombia and what their services look like has been super interesting to me. I've appreciated the opportunity to participate in the youth group as well.

Career/Professional Development: Working at my placement this year has helped me to grow in a lot of ways professionally. At my placement, I help to oversee a group of about eight college interns. This was a scary commitment for me at first (as I am only one year out of college), but I've enjoyed connecting with the interns and being able to provide them with advice from what I learned during my college internships. This has also been a great way to connect with people my age who have similar career interests.

New Perspectives: I have come to recognize strong qualities of resilience and the ability to challenge myself in hard situations. It's really hard to continue showing up day after day, especially in a new culture with a new language, but I've been proud of myself and how I've been able to continue to do that. I've had previous cross-cultural experiences that helped prepare me for SALT, so most of my time this year has been spent building on those experiences and continuing to think about the differences between my country and my host country.

Future Plans: Although I am not sure what I will do after I head back to the U.S., I know I will take a lot of what I have learned and integrate that into my future career. I am excited to be able to share everything that I've learned with my family, friends and church community who have been supporting me throughout this year and seeing snippets of what I've been up to.

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Charles “Charlie” Welch *(USA)*

Educational Assistant, Puerta de Esperanza
Guatemala City, Guatemala



First Impression or Differences: I instantly felt a strong reconnection with Guatemala when I got there in July, as I had dreamt of returning for years.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Hosting my dad, step-mom, sister, and step-sister for a week here in Guatemala.

Faith Journey: My faith in the Lord has grown as He has continued to lead me through difficult and also prospering times.

Career/Professional Development: Throughout this year I've learned how to use my skills and education in special education: intense interventions, in an avenue and environment that I didn't plan on using them. I've also been able to develop quite a bit of Spanish language skills since being here which is something that I've always wanted to learn.

New Perspectives: Understanding more of who I am and how my dreams and callings in life interact, clash and flourish with one another.

Future Plans: As of right now, I plan to return to the United States and get back to teaching special education. I don't know where yet—maybe close to my family in Indiana, out in Colorado with some friends, or somewhere else I venture to.

“Contigo”

Or “with you” in Spanish. I had to try to look for the ways God was with me even through the lonely, uncomfortable, and the anxious times.

“Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.” Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)

(Rebecca McKague, SALT, Canada to Mexico)

Crisis/Adaptability

The first word that comes to mind is “crisis,” not for myself, but because of the many crises Lebanon is still going through. They affected my day-to-day activities, what I consider normal, and how I respond to things. So maybe a better word would be “adaptability” instead.

(Sarah Janzen, SALT, Canada to Lebanon)

Daring

This year has stretched me and challenged me in ways I couldn’t have prepared for. Yet I didn’t and haven’t given up.

(Lynette Madrigal-Granados, SALT, USA to Guatemala)

Enlightening

I would say that this year has shone a light on me, my relationships, my interactions with the world, and has opened my eyes to new ways of thinking.

(Joefin Peter, SALT, Canada to Lebanon)

Expansion

I feel that this year is represented by the word expansion on all levels relating to my own personal growth, the increase in knowledge and influence that is being spread through all these local NGOs and organizations, and global resilience in the face of COVID. Life always provides opportunities for growth and expansion of knowledge and capacities.

(Annie Serez, SALT, Canada to Palestine and Israel)

Growth

Not only was this year a time for self-growth and expanding my comfort zone, but my assignment also revolved around the growth of plants like bell peppers, tomatoes and plantains.

(Erika Enomoto, SALT, USA to Nicaragua)

Growth

I needed a big change in my environment to facilitate the change that needed to happen in my mind, heart, and lifestyle. This year gave me hope for myself again, a sense of purpose.

(John “Colin” Caisley, SALT, USA to Kenya)

Joy

Joy is different from happiness. It can be felt in life's valleys as well as mountaintops. The poet Mary Oliver says, "Joy is not meant to be a crumb," and yet sometimes it is just a crumb of enjoyment in the smallest things like using a new Swahili word or phrase correctly, or finally getting a really good coffee. It is a crumb when life is hard and overwhelming and is a reminder of how there is still so much good in life all the time.

(Kathryn "Kate" Nieuwsma, SALT, USA to Kenya)

"Muhindo"

The Lukonjo name my host sisters gave me. It's used for a person born after a sibling of the opposite gender, and it comes from the Lukonjo word for "change." I like how it represents the ways this year has changed me.

(Ben Stutzman, SALT, USA to Uganda)

Rewarding

I believe that rewards only come from overcoming something difficult and challenging. This entire year has been like that for me. So many amazing rewards with my family and job, and so many challenges and struggles.

(Autumn Chandler, SALT, USA to Bolivia)

Self-discovery

This year has given me a lot of time to reflect on my life, learn about what is really important to me, and what I need to do to get there.

(Hannah Geurkink, SALT, Canada to Egypt)

Thankful

I've been so grateful for all my experiences so far this year and I feel so blessed for the opportunities that I've had, the people that I've met, and the work that I've been able to become involved in.

(Clara Unzicker, SALT, USA to Colombia)

Toca

In Guatemala "toca" is a slang word for, "it is what it is."

(Charlie Welch, SALT, USA to Guatemala)

Trust

There is no other way I would have been able to sit through countless motorcycle-taxi rides, weaving through traffic; to create and lead a workshop by myself; to navigate relationships (and some of their dissolutions) both back home, and here in Kenya without it. I had to trust that I was led here in the first place, and that there was beauty and meaning woven throughout, when I was flailing, heartbroken or in deep awe.

(Kathryn Swartz, SALT, USA to Kenya)

Unexpected

Well, I started out spending almost half my term in a country different from my original assignment, and then ended up splitting my time between two partner organizations, which wasn't in the original plan. Most of the things and tasks I have enjoyed most are activities that I didn't even know I would be involved in, like church potlucks, gardening and watching drama series with my SALT/YAMEN roommates.

(Anna Herning, SALT, USA to Palestine and Israel)

Unprecedented

This year was absolutely the most exciting, eventful and enjoyable one yet. Not only did I have the opportunity to learn more about myself, more about Rwanda, and improve my professional skills—I got to try so many new things and form exceptional friendships.

(Olivia Knull, SALT, Canada to Rwanda)

Unpredictable

This last year has just been super crazy and whenever I felt like I had a plan, even if it was just for an evening, something would happen, and my plan wouldn't work out. From my workplace having a COVID-19 outbreak and shutting down for three weeks, to my host family getting COVID-19 over Christmas break, to just random power cuts throughout the day.

(Ranita DiMarco, SALT, USA to Zimbabwe)

YAMEN



Eida Antonio García



Abigail Arévalo Tabora



Tiara Asrilita



Neema Atieno



Josue Damião



Charity Dralega



Beatriz Guazá Sandoval



Mario Hernández



Jacksha Jackson



Sunil Kadmaset



Mudimka Kassam



Jenny Keang



Finna Kristanto



Natacha Kyendrebeogo

YAMEN



Juyeong Lee



Anupama Mandi



Disha Masih



Ananda Murmu



Loyce Twongirwe



Jinah Yu

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Elda Antonio García (Mexico)

Migration Communications and Advocacy Assistant,
CASM
San Pedro Sula, Honduras.



First Impression or Differences: In general, I can say that there is a difference in language, food and climate. But mainly I could tell the difference of staying in these countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Primera impresión o diferencias:

De manera general puedo decir que hay diferencia en el idioma, comida y clima. Pero principalmente pude notar la diferencia de permanecer en estos países durante la pandemia Covid-19.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I remember that Wendy Vado Change to Connecting Peoples Coordinator (CPC), came to San Pedro Sula in order to visit both us YAMENers and CASM. One day in the afternoon we went hiking at the “merendón” and we were going to be picked up by a person with a white car who was going to take us back to our homes. However, during the wait we saw that a white car was approaching and I said it is that one (we did not know the car, nor did we distinguish the person). Then we approached with all the intention of getting in and leaving, really Wendy and Beatriz Guaza would have been inside the car, they tried to open it but obviously they couldn’t because it wasn’t the right car! We laughed a lot that day and the best thing was that when the right car arrived, they no longer trusted me, but asked questions...from there they never paid attention to me hahahahaha

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Recuerdo que Wendy Vado CPC, vino a San Pedro Sula con la finalidad de visitarnos tanto a nosotras las Yameners como a CASM, un día en la tarde fuimos a hacer senderismo al merendon de coca cola y nos iba a recoger una persona con carro blanco que nos iba a trasladar de regreso a nuestras casas, sin embargo, durante la espera vimos que un carro blanco se aproximaba y yo dije es ese (No conocíamos el carro, ni tampoco distinguíamos a la persona) Entonces nos acercamos con toda la intención de subirnos e irnos, realmente Wendy y Beatriz Guaza hubiesen estado adentro del carro, si no fuera porque tenía seguro, intentaron abrir, pero obviamente no pudieron ¡Por que no era el carro correcto! Reímos muchísimo ese día y lo mejor fue que cuando llego el carro correcto, ya no confiaron, sino, preguntaron...desde ahí nunca jamás me hicieron caso jajajajaja*

Faith Journey: In the area where I live is the metropolitan area of Mexico, so I am not regularly used to walking too far up mountains. I had the experience on a mission trip with the Central Mennonite Church of San Pedro. We were walking along a creek of the department of Santa Barbara and had to cross it. I tried to follow the route and finish without fatigue, I managed to do it! So has been this journey of faith and experience in this volunteer service that I have done at MCC.

Viaje de fe: *En la zona donde yo vivo es la zona metropolitana de México, así que regularmente no estoy acostumbrada a caminar demasiado subiendo montañas, tuve la experiencia en un viaje misionero por parte de la Iglesia Menonita Central de San Pedro participar de ir hacia Quebrada Honda del departamento de Santa Bárbara. Me mentalice para subir la montaña, seguir el recorrido y terminar sin cansancio; ¡Logre hacerlo! Así mismo ha sido este viaje de fe y experiencia en este servicio voluntario que he hecho en CCM.*

Career/professional Development: With the returned migrant support program, which is the area where I am serving at CASM, I have learned to do simple things, such as program management and information. But I have also learned to give attention to people who come in need of help in their being. It is a program where you learn by doing multiple activities

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *El programa de Apoyo a Migrantes Retornados que es el área en donde estoy en CASM he aprendido hacer cosas sencillas, como manejo de programas e información, pero también he aprendido a dar una atención a personas que vienen con necesidad de ayuda en su ser. Es un programa que aprendes a hacer de todo y múltiples actividades.*

New Perspectives: Personally, I never thought that I could have had so much change in a short time, I met simple people and I was surrounded by people who all they wanted to do was help me, hug me, attend to me and teach me. Everything around me makes me see God’s love for my life.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Personalmente nunca pensé que pudiera haber tenido tanto cambio en poco tiempo, conocí a gente sencilla y me rodearon personas que lo único que querían hacer era ayudarme, abrazarme, atenderme y enseñarme. Todo mi exterior que me rodea me hace ver el amor de Dios a mi vida.*

Future Plans: I have the plan to join a mission expedition “Global Vision” for a duration of two weeks in the last weeks of August. I have also found my vocation of service and I have the plan to study the bachelor of theology to have my professional degree. I learned the planning of projects and agendas, wishing I could add that to my local church and my life.

Planes Futuros: *Tengo el plan de incorporarme a una expedición de misiones "Visión Global" con duración de 2 semanas en las últimas semanas del mes de agosto, también he hallado mi vocación de servicio y tengo el plan de estudiar la licenciatura de Teología oficialmente para así tener mi grado profesional. Aprendí la planeación de proyectos y agendas, deseando poder sumar eso a mi iglesia local y mi vida.*

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Abigail Arévalo Tabora (Honduras)

Project Assistant, El Faro Home & Talita Cumi Children's Home
Santa Cruz, Bolivia



First Impression or Differences:

I feel that Bolivia is a very conservative country, unlike Honduras. In Bolivia, carbohydrates are consumed in large quantities every meal. My first impression was that it is a very beautiful country with a lot of cultural diversity. Santa Cruz

de la Sierra is a very hot city and it is a climate that in Honduras I was not used to. The diversity of Bolivia is so wide that there is always something new to know or learn, and it is a very large country. Bolivian food is spicy and with a lot of onion, but in my part of Honduras it is not. Something very different is that in Santa Cruz Bolivia there is purified drinking water and you can drink it directly from the refrigerator and in Honduras that cannot be done. I think there are too many differences but I will leave it like that for the moment.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Bolivia siento es un país muy conservador a diferencia de Honduras. En Bolivia se consume en grandes cantidades carbohidratos en sus comidas. Mi primera impresión es que es un país muy bonito con mucha diversidad cultural. Santa cruz de la sierra es una ciudad muy caliente y es un clima al cual en Honduras no estaba acostumbrada. La diversidad de Bolivia es tan amplia que siempre hay algo nuevo por saber o aprender, y es un país muy grande. La comida Bolivia es picante y con mucha cebolla y en Honduras no. Algo muy diferente es que en santa cruz Bolivia hay agua potable purificada y puedes tomarla directamente del frigorífico y en Honduras eso no se puede hacer. Creo que son demasiadas las diferencias, pero por resultar esas por el momento.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: I would definitely say that until now it has been visiting the Salar de Uyuni (salt flats), it is an unforgettable experience, feeling that you are in the clouds and at the same time walking on the sea. I could only thank God for knowing that place and appreciating how wonderful it was and see the sunset and the mirror that was formed. It was just extraordinary.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Definitivamente diría que hasta el momento ha Sido conocer el salar de Uyuni, es una experiencia inolvidable, sentir que estás en las nubes y a la vez caminando sobre el mar, solo podía dar gracias a Dios por conocer ese lugar y apreciar lo maravilloso que era y ver el atardecer y el espejo que se formaba. Fue simplemente extraordinario.*

Faith Journey: My path of faith has been a roller coaster, at first it was very difficult for me to fit in with my church, with the young people, because I did not agree with many things that were being done and I felt that I was rather moving away and limiting my faith and connection with God. Nowadays I get along much better with young people, I feel that I have an affection for them and I learned to say no and that I did not like to do some things and they learned to respect that my culture is also different. So now in the church I have fun and I have learned to connect better, so you could say that I get along better with the youth services and with the pastors.

Viaje de fe: *mi camino en la fe, ha Sido una montaña rusa, al principio se me fue muy difícil encajar en mi iglesia, con los jóvenes pues no estaba de acuerdo con muchas cosas que se hacían y sentía que más bien me estaba alejando y limitando mi fe y conexión con Dios. Ahora en la actualidad me llevo mucho mejor con los jóvenes, siento que les tengo un afecto y aprendí a decir que no y que no me gustaba hacer las cosas y ellos aprendieron a respetar que mi cultura también es diferente, así que ahora en la iglesia me divierto y he aprendido a conectar mejor, así que se podría decir que me llevo mejor con los cultos de jóvenes y con los pastores.*

Career/Professional Development: I feel that working in children homes opens your mind in an incredible way. I have learned about empathy, understanding and patience, I learned the ability to teach children and correct from love and not violence. In a professional way it has had a great influence since now my knowledge has grown about the laws and rights of children and how they are violated. I aspire to work legally with the rights of children, I hope to continue learning and above all to leave a grain of sand of what I know.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *siento que Trabajar en hogares te abre la mente de una manera increíble, he aprendido sobre empatía, comprensión y paciencia, aprendí la habilidad para enseñar a los niños y corregir*

desde el amor y no con violencia. De manera profesional ha influido de gran manera puesto que ahora mis conocimientos sobre las leyes y derechos de los niños y como estos se violentan, aspiro a trabajar legalmente con los derechos de los niños, espero seguir aprendiendo y sobre todo dejar un granito de arena de lo que sé.

New Perspectives: About me: a lot about empathy and compassion and knowing that you must go beyond just imagining or trying to feel what the other is going through, it is something that must come from love. Passion for teaching and passion for children. A lot about the legal way of dealing with education problems and understanding that what the government says it offers is very different from what it actually gives. I thought I was a non-affectionate person or one who does not get attached easily until I got to know the hearts of children and how they show you their love and gratitude in such small gestures. From others, knowing that we are not all the same in any context, neither in the church nor at work, each person is a world and it is always good to give five minutes of your time to learn a little about the stories of others. The church was a great shock because I felt that it was a very conservative church and it is very different from my church of origin, so my perspective have now changed. I took the time to get to know, and know that behind everything there is a story and although I'm not 100% yet, little by little I've made progress learning that even in Mennonite churches everywhere can be very different, and different isn't bad, it's just different. I am eager to return to my country and teach and put everything into practice, my perspective of returning to Honduras is very different, I know that the country has changed a bit, but the people around me have not, but I am someone different from when I came, so it makes me anxious to see how people react to the new me.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Sobre mi: mucho sobre la empatía y compasión y saber que vas más allá de sólo imaginar o intentar sentir lo que el otro está pasando, es algo que va desde el amor, la enseñanza, la pasión por hacer y pasión por los niños. Mucho sobre la forma legal de llevar los problemas de educación y entender que es muy diferente los que la gobernación dice ofrecer y lo que realmente dan. Creí que era una persona no afectuosa o que no se encariña fácilmente hasta que conocí el corazón de los niños y como ellos en gestos tan pequeños te demuestran su amor y su agradecimiento. De los demás saber que no todos somos iguales en ningún contexto, ni en la iglesia ni el trabajo, cada persona es un mundo y siempre es bueno dar 5 min de tu tiempo para conocer un poco sobre las historias de los demás. La iglesia fue un gran choque, pues yo sentí que era una iglesia muy conservadora y es muy diferente a mi iglesia de origen, así que mi perspectiva ahora ha cambiado, me di el tiempo de conocer y saber que detrás de todo hay una historia y aunque aún no esté al 100 poco a poco he avanzado aprendiendo que incluso en las iglesias

menonitas todo puede ser muy diferente, y diferente no es mal, solo es diferente. Estoy ansiosa de regresar a mi país y enseñar y poner en práctica todo, mi perspectiva del regreso a Honduras es muy diferente, sé que el país ha cambiado un poco, pero las personas que me rodean no, pero yo soy alguien diferente a cuando vine, así que me pone ansiosa el ver cómo reacciona las personas a mi nuevo yo.

Future Plans: Something that I really want when I arrive is to be able to create a foundation for teenage mothers who have been victims of some kind of abuse, and I hope that with what I have learned I start something beautiful. I know that it is a long process but I long to be able to do it since in my city it is needed a lot. I hope to be able to work on my career and put legal practice into practice and continue working with children. And also I hope to continue working in my cafeteria and to be able to implement many Bolivian things. In my church I have many teachings and anecdotes that I hope to be able to share and tell my church about my experience as well.

Planes Futuros: Algo que deseo mucho al llegar es poder crear una fundación para madres adolescentes que han sido víctimas de algún abuso, y espero que con lo aprendido empiece por algo, sé que es un proceso largo pero ansío poder hacerlo ya que en mi ciudad se necesita mucho. Espero poder trabajar en mi carrera y poner en práctica lo legal y seguir trabajando con niños. Y también seguir trabajando en mi cafetería y poder implementar muchas cosas bolivianas. En mi iglesia llevo muchas enseñanzas y anécdotas que espero poder compartir y contar a mi iglesia también sobre mi experiencia.

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Tiara Asrilita (Indonesia)

Early Childhood Teacher Assistant,
St. Monica Pre-Primary School, Juju, Kiambu, Kenya
Kiambu, Kenya



First impressions or Difference:

The first time I arrived at Jomo Kenyatta (International airport of Kenya) there were animal statues lined along the way. That has strengthened my understanding of Kenya and Africa which is famous for beautiful animals. On the way by train when I went to Mombasa, I saw animals living freely in the green field like giraffe, hyena, camel, elephant and zebra. It was a wonderful journey. Most people in Kenya prefer walking when going to different places or using private cars or public transportation. There is public transportation, the name is Matatu (Minibus). The drivers of different Matatus usually put loud songs on which makes me enjoy it.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *La primera vez que llegué a Jomo Kenyatta (aeropuerto internacional de Kenia) había estatuas de animales a lo largo del camino. Eso ha fortalecido mi comprensión de Kenia África continental, famosa por sus bellos animales. De camino en tren cuando fui a Mombasa. Vi animales viviendo libremente en el campo verde, como: jirafas, hienas, camellos, elefantes, cebras. Fue un viaje maravilloso. La mayoría de las personas en Kenia prefieren caminar cuando van a diferentes lugares o usan automóviles privados o transporte público. Hay transporte público el nombre es Matatu (Minibus). Los conductores de diferentes Matatus suelen poner la música fuerte y me hace disfrutar.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: I got a placement in pre-primary school. The first time when I went to school and met with the children all of them were so excited even touching me from my hair, my hands and my legs. They were surprised to see me. When going somewhere especially taking a walk in the road, most people stare at me, others calling me “mzungu” (what Kenyan people call a white person). Many people thought I am from China, so they could greet me with Mandarin language. I felt funny because I didn’t know mandarin language. When they greeted me on the way when we met, I could just smile and wave.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Conseguí una asignación en la escuela preprimaria. La primera vez que fui a la escuela y me reuní con los niños, todos estaban muy emocionados e incluso me tocaban el pelo, las manos y las piernas. Se sorprendieron al verme. Cuando voy a algún lugar, especialmente al dar un paseo por la calle, la mayoría de la gente me mira fijamente, otros me llaman “mzungu” (los kenianos llaman así a las personas de piel blanca). Muchas personas pensaron que era de China, por lo que intentaban saludarme en el idioma mandarín. Se sentía gracioso porque sé un poco de mandarín. Cuando me saludaron en el camino solo podía sonreír y saludar.*

Faith Journey: To be here is the best opportunity for me. Imagine, I have never lived far away from my home, and never even used a plane. This is my first experience. I was afraid with everything, but now I am used to it. I realize that without Jesus, I can’t do anything. I feel that Jesus is always accompanying me and always helping me till now. Life alone in another country, facing the difficult things, it’s not easy. Sometimes I feel so bored, tired, sad, lonely, I need someone to hear me. Due to this I feel that Jesus is always at my side in every situation and I thank him for that. At every situation and time when I offer what I have to him, he gives me strength and joy. Life is full of ups and downs, but with him everything is possible. One of my favorite Bible verse is from Philippians 4:13. So when I face difficult things, I just remember that verse. I recognize the presence of Jesus when I listen to worship songs, reading different bible

verses, or Christian captions on Instagram. I believe that only Jesus knows me so well. There is none I can rely on in the world rather than Him.

Viaje de fe: *Estar aquí es la mejor oportunidad para mí. Imagínate, nunca he vivido lejos de mi casa, y ni siquiera usado un avión. Esta es mi primera experiencia. Tenía miedo de todo, pero ahora me acostumbré. Me doy cuenta de que, sin Jesús no habría podido hacer nada. Siento que Jesús siempre me está acompañando y siempre me ha estado ayudando hasta ahora. La vida sola en otro país, enfrentando las cosas difíciles, no es fácil. A veces me siento tan aburrida, cansada, triste, sola, que necesito que alguien me escuche. Por eso siento que Jesús está siempre a mi lado en cada situación y le agradezco por ello. En cada situación y momento en que le ofrezco lo que tengo, Él me da fuerza y alegría. La vida está llena de altibajos, pero con Él todo es posible. Uno de mis versículos bíblicos favoritos es Filipenses 4:13. Entonces, cuando enfrento cosas difíciles, solo recuerdo ese versículo. Reconozco la presencia de Jesús cuando escucho canciones de adoración, leo diferentes versículos de la Biblia o publicaciones cristianas en Instagram. Creo que solo Jesús me conoce tan bien que no hay nadie en quien pueda confiar en todo el mundo más que en Él.*

Career/Professional Development: This opportunity has greatly influenced my understanding. Due to these interactions with different people I am interested in serving others, especially young people since the young generation are the leaders of tomorrow. Thus, the character must be formed from an early age. Living this life is not just for living but, figuring out how we can produce fruit and be a blessing to others. Not only professing that we are Christian, this should be shown and be proved by the Christian faith in real life.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Esta oportunidad ha influido mucho en mi comprensión. Debido a las variadas interacciones, diferentes personas están interesadas en servir a los demás, especialmente a los jóvenes. Pues la generación joven son los líderes del mañana. Por lo tanto, el carácter debe formarse desde una edad temprana. Vivir esta vida no es solo vivir, sino cómo podemos producir fruto y ser una bendición para los demás. No sólo profesar que somos cristianos, sino que esto debe ser demostrado y probado por la fe cristiana en la vida real.*

New Perspectives: I can know myself better. I am more grateful for everything that happens in my life. Even the smallest things which I may have taken for granted. After going through this experience, I can see the greatness of God in my life. Since God has every plan in my life, I believe that his presence controls everything. Although the process is not easy, he always strengthens me.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Puedo conocerme mejor. Estoy más agradecida por todo lo que sucede en mi vida. Incluso las cosas más pequeñas que pueda haber dado por sentadas. Después de pasar por esta experiencia, puedo ver la grandeza de Dios en mi vida. Como Dios tiene todos los planes en mi vida, creo que Su presencia lo controla todo. Aunque el proceso no es fácil, Él siempre me fortalece.

Future Plans: I don't know God's future for me, but I trust that God holds my future. For me, after finishing this program, I will share my experience during this program with my church community and continue to be a teacher in Sunday school. Besides that, I have been planning to be a priest in the church or a teacher in the school. I will teach Christian religious education according to my study in college.

Planes Futuros: No sé el futuro que Dios tiene para mí, pero confío en que Dios lo tiene. Para mí, después de terminar este programa, compartiré mi experiencia de este programa con la comunidad de mi iglesia y continuaré siendo maestra en la Escuela Dominical. Además de eso, he estado planeando ser pastora en la iglesia o maestra en la escuela. Enseñaré Educación religiosa cristiana según mis estudios en la universidad.

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Neema Atieno (Kenya)

International Communication Officer, Voice of Love Phnom Penh, Cambodia



First Impression or Differences: There isn't much difference from my country apart from the food, mode of transportation to work and the weather.

Primera impresión o diferencias: No hay mucha diferencia con mi país aparte de la comida, el modo de transporte al trabajo y el clima

Memorable or Funny Experience: I had a great time travelling with my fellow YAMENers to Siem Reap to visit Angkor Wat and see around the town, which was a great experience and we had lots of fun.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Me lo pasé muy bien viajando con mis compañeros de YAMEN a Siem Reap para visitar Angkor Wat y ver los alrededores de la ciudad, lo cual fue una gran experiencia y nos divertimos mucho.

Faith Journey: I haven't had any difficulties.

Viaje de fe: No he tenido ninguna dificultad.

Career/Professional Development: It has helped me gain more experience and I have been able to practice what I learned in the university as I keep improving my skills.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: Me ha ayudado a obtener más experiencia y he podido practicar lo que aprendí en la universidad a medida que sigo mejorando mis habilidades.

New Perspectives: It wasn't easy at first to adjust to the environment, but after a few weeks I got to adjust and am currently enjoying every bit of it.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Al principio no fue fácil adaptarme al entorno, pero en unas pocas semanas logré adaptarme y actualmente disfruto cada parte de él.

Future Plans: To get a job and continue living my life and adjust to my country's setting.

Planes Futuros: Quiero conseguir un trabajo y seguir viviendo mi vida y adaptarme al entorno de mi país.

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Josue Damião (Mozambique)

Teacher and Community Worker, Golden Era Convent School Chhattisgarh, India



First Impression or Differences: My first impression was of charm and delight. The coordinator in Mozambique, Mr. John, appealed to us not to create many expectations, and in doing so I believe I ended up preparing to marvel at what I could see: humble and cheerful people.

Primera impresión o diferencias: Mi primera impresión fue de encanto y deleite, mi anterior coordinador en mozambique el Sr. John nos apeló a no crear muchas expectativas, y al hacerlo creo que terminé preparándome para maravillarme con las noticias que pude ver: gente humilde y alegre.

Memorable or Funny Experience: Spending Christmas with all the employees of MCC India, singing, dancing and eating delicious food. Riding with Ruchi and Jenny in eco-park and memorial victory, Christmas in the church praising God and carol singing were happy moments, not to mention that the host family is amazing.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Pasar navidad con todos los empleados de CCM India, cantando, bailando y probando comida deliciosa, paseando con Ruchi y Jenny en eco park y memorial victoria, navidad en la iglesia Alabado sea Dios y Carol cantando fueron momentos felices, sin mencionar que la familia anfitriona es increíble.

Faith Journey: Looking at the faith I still had and still face a huge challenge for linguistic issues. Since India has a huge linguistic diversity beyond Hindi, in the current city where I live, I also talk Chattisgarh. It becomes difficult to share what I know from the Bible and learn from the people for linguistic reasons but at the very least, we can share!

Viaje de fe: Mirando la fe que tenía y todavía me enfrente a una gran desafío por cuestiones lingüísticas ya que India tiene una gran diversidad lingüística y más allá del hindi en la ciudad actual donde vivo. También hablar Chattisgarh se vuelve difícil compartir lo que sé de la Biblia y aprender de los nativos por razones lingüísticas, pero al menos podemos compartir, ¡compártimos!

Career/Professional Development: Looking at my professional career I learned the importance of being a good educator and new teaching methodologies. I also realized that education is the cure for many social problems, and that has awakened even more in me the desire to be a teacher.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: mirando mi carrera profesional aprendí la importancia de ser un buen educador y nuevas metodologías de enseñanza. También me di cuenta de que la educación es la solución para muchos problemas sociales que ha despertado aún más en mí el deseo de ser maestro.

New Perspectives: After going through this program, I learned that house is home, I learned that the church is a family and needs to endure each member. The time I am spending in India is awakening respect for those who know me for me, and my respect for them as well as to understand the value of each of them.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Después de pasar por este programa sostengo que la casa es el hogar, aprendí que la iglesia es una familia y necesitas soportar a cada miembro, el tiempo que estoy pasando en India está despertando el respeto por aquellos que me conocen por quien soy y el mío por ellos también como para entender el valor de cada uno de ellos.

Future Plans: After returning to my country within the church I will ask for space to give a kind of training where I will share the experience gained, speak of the peacebuilding, speak of the English language and the Hindi language that I know and everything I have learned in the church.

Planes Futuros: Después de regresar a mi país dentro de la iglesia pediré espacio para dar una especie de capacitación y en la capacitación compartiré la experiencia ganada para Dios, hablar de la construcción de paz, hablar del idioma inglés y el idioma hindi, Lo que sé y todo lo he aprendido en la iglesia.

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Charity Dralega (Uganda)

Teaching Assistant, Latin Patriarchate Schools
Amman, Jordan



First Impression or Differences:

When I first arrived in Jordan what I noticed was honking of cars, and I was struck by the different sounds the gas and vegetable trucks made. I thought they were passing some information to the community, but little did I know that's how gas is being sold in Jordan which I found very interesting. The hospitality in Jordan is unmatched and is extended not just by those hosting you but by locals as well, I however learned it is not polite to say NO to anything given to you.

Primera impresión o diferencias: Cuando llegué por primera vez a Jordania, lo que noté fue el claxon de los autos y me sorprendieron los diferentes sonidos que hacían los camiones de gasolina y vegetales, pensé que estaban pasando información a la comunidad, pero no sabía que así es como se vende la gasolina en Jordania eso me pareció muy interesante. La hospitalidad en Jordania es inigualable y la brindan no solo quienes te hospedan, sino también todas las personas locales. Sin embargo, aprendí que es maleducado decir que NO a algo que te ofrescan.

Memorable or Funny Experience: My time in Jordan has been filled with amazing experiences from the food, the people, and the places I visited. If I were to choose one moment it was the day I visited a friend at her family home, her mum invited me for dinner and off I went because I wanted to eat a nice Jordanian home cooked meal. While having dinner I knew there was so much food and by all means I had to finish the food her mum had served me. But whenever I almost finished, she would say a word in Arabic and all I did was nod my head, and whenever I nodded my head more food was served on my plate. I could not eat any longer because I was too satisfied. I then asked my friend why her mum was continuously serving me more food, and she said it's because me nodding meant I wanted more. From that day I had to learn the sentence and response used when one asks whether you needed more food and how to respond. To me that's a day I will not forget.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Mi tiempo en Jordania ha estado lleno de experiencias increíbles de comida deliciosa, de gente hermosa, y hermosos lugares que visité. Si tuviera que elegir un momento, sería el día en que visité a una amiga en la casa de su familia, su madre me invitó a cenar y fui porque quería comer una buena comida casera jordana. Mientras cenaba sabía que había mucha comida y por todos los medios tenía que terminar la comida que su mamá me había servido, pero cada vez que casi terminaba, ella decía una palabra en árabe y todo lo que hacía era asentir con la cabeza, y cuando Asentí con la cabeza, me sirvieron más comida en el plato. No pude comer más porque estaba demasiado llena, luego le pregunté a mi amiga por qué su madre continuamente me servía más comida, y ella dijo que era porque yo asentía con la cabeza y quería más. A partir de ese día tuve que aprender la frase y la respuesta que se usa para cuando me ofrecieran más comida y cómo responder. Para mí ese es un día que no olvidaré.*

Faith Journey: I feel I have seen and felt constantly the presences of God in my life throughout this service term. My decision to remain and work in Amman, Jordan after I couldn't go on with my original assignment was a quick one, but God saw me through all this psychological transformation I had to go through. I have learned to value these big leaps of faith God puts me through and be more thankful for the opportunities he gives me.

Viaje de fe: *Siento que he visto y me he sentido constantemente consciente de la presenciade Dios en mi vida a lo largo de este período de servicio. Mi decisión de quedarme y trabajar en Jordania-Amán después de que no pude continuar con mi asignación original fue rápida, pero Dios me ayudó a superar toda esta transformación psicológica por la que tuve que pasar. He aprendido a valorar estos grandes saltos de fe que Dios me ha hecho hacer y a ser más agradecida por las oportunidades que él me da.*

Career/Professional Development: Not even in my wildest dream did I at one point think I would be teaching in a classroom. Coming from a family with parents who are teachers, I didn't want to become a teacher and chose a different path. However since I could not be in my original placement, I had to make a quick decision on what I wanted to do, what better option but to work with children? This experience has made me realize that everyone is a teacher and as a social worker I have been able to exercise my skills in the school which I want to continue doing "inshallah" (God willing) back home in my community. As a result of this experience, I am also more deeply committed to the education for girl children and only wish more could be done in the Jordan education system.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Ni siquiera en mi sueño más loco pensé en un momento que estaría enseñando en un salón de clases. Viniendo de una familia con padres que son maestros, no quería ser maestra y elegí un camino diferente, sin embargo, como no podía estar en mi ubicación original, tuve que tomar una decisión rápida sobre lo que quería hacer. qué mejor opción que trabajar con niños. Esta experiencia me ha hecho dar cuenta de que todos son maestros y como trabajadora social he podido ejercer mis habilidades en la escuela, lo cual quiero seguir haciendo "inshallah" (si Dios quiere) de vuelta a casa en mi comunidad. Como resultado de esta experiencia, también estoy más profundamente comprometida con la educación de las niñas y solo deseo que se pueda hacer más en el sistema educativo jordano.*

New Perspectives: I've been reminded of some things I took for granted that are so important. Coming from a society that equally values family and relationships I realized that compared to the Arab culture I didn't take my beautiful culture and relationships so seriously like the families and people I found here. I have got to know it's not about the tasks and one's productivity, but the relationship you have with God, family and other relationships that are important.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *He recordado algunas cosas que daba por sentado que son muy importantes. Viniendo de una sociedad que valora igualmente la familia y las relaciones, me di cuenta de que, en comparación con la cultura árabe, no me tomaba mi hermosa cultura y mis relaciones tan en serio como las familias y las personas que encontré aquí. Tengo que saber que no se trata de las tareas y la productividad de uno, sino de la relación que tienes con Dios, la familia y otras relaciones que son importantes.*

Future Plans: I don't have a specific plan for when I get home, but what I know is I have always loved doing humanitarian work. First, I plan on getting a job. Serving with MCC has proven to me that I have to do more in my community, especially in the schools which I plan on doing.

Planes Futuros: *No tengo un plan específico para cuando llegue a casa, pero lo que sé es que siempre me ha gustado hacer trabajo humanitario. Primero, planeo conseguir un trabajo, servir con CCM me ha demostrado que tengo que hacer más en mi comunidad, especialmente en las escuelas*

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Beatriz Guazá Sandoval (Colombia)

Community Facilitator, CASM
San Pedro Sula, Honduras



First impression or differences:

I had previously heard that San Pedro Sula was a very dangerous city, and that there was even more danger in the communities where I would develop my time of service, however, there wasn't a time that caused me fear. As I began to go to the "bordos," vulnerable communities surrounding the rivers in San Pedro Sula, I could see the other side of the coin, a set of wonderful, kind, cheerful people, willing to make small and big changes; children, teenagers and young people full of life, active, intelligent and eager to learn. Empowered women who often put their neighbor above their personal interests.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Había escuchado previamente que San Pedro Sula era una ciudad muy peligrosa, y que aún había más peligro en las comunidades donde desarrollaría mi tiempo de servicio, sin embargo, esto en ningún momento me produjo temor. Al empezar a ir a los bordos, comunidades vulnerables aledañas a los ríos en San Pedro Sula, pude ver la otra cara de la moneda, un conjunto de personas maravillosas, amables, alegres, dispuestas a hacer pequeños y grandes cambios; niños, niñas, adolescentes y jóvenes llenos de vida, activos, inteligentes y con muchas ganas de aprender. Mujeres empoderadas que en muchas ocasiones ponen al prójimo por encima de sus intereses personales.*

Memorable or Fun Experience: There are many experiences that I will never forget, but I want to mention the trips made with my friend Elda Guadalupe Antonio, from Mexico. When crossing borders, something different always happened to us, just because we had Colombian and Mexican nationalities at times we became the center of attention of several immigration and customs agents. The important thing is that we accompanied each other and when the uncomfortable moment passed, we could not help laughing at "the story of the Colombian and the Mexican."

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Hay muchas experiencias que nunca olvidaré, pero quiero mencionar los viajes realizados con mi amiga Elda Guadalupe Antonio, de México. Al atravesar fronteras siempre nos ocurría algo diferente, solo por el hecho de tener nacionalidades colombiana y mexicana en algunos momentos nos convertíamos en el centro de atención de varios agentes de migración y aduanas. Lo importante es que nos acompañábamos y cuando pasaba el momento*

incómodo no podíamos evitar reírnos de "La historia de la colombiana y la mexicana"

Journey of Faith: During this time, I have learned to listen more to the voice of God, I have realized that his perfect and pleasant, good will has begun to be fulfilled in my life. I was also able to understand that my faith must be active, and I cannot stay in my comfort zone waiting for things to happen but must do something to change what is happening around me.

Viaje de fe: *Durante este tiempo he aprendido a escuchar más la voz de Dios, me he dado cuenta que su buena perfecta y agradable voluntad se ha empezado a cumplir en mi vida. También pude comprender que mi fe debe ser activa y no me puedo quedar en mi zona de confort esperando que las cosas sucedan, sino que debo hacer algo para cambiar lo que sucede a mi alrededor.*

Career/Professional Development: I have learned to cultivate patience, to prioritize activities, to interact with community leadership, parents and children from different communities and contexts. I have also learned how to make project schedules and reports. It is interesting to participate in the hard work that is done in an NGO, this requires a lot of perseverance, observation, flexibility and assertiveness.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *He aprendido a cultivar la paciencia, a priorizar actividades, a interactuar con liderazgo comunitario, padres, madres y NNA de diferentes comunidades y contextos. También he aprendido a realizar cronogramas e informes de proyectos. Es interesante participar del arduo trabajo que se hace en una ONG, ello requiere mucha perseverancia, observación, flexibilidad y asertividad.*

New Perspectives: Now I know myself a little more, I am aware that I need to develop disciplines of self-care, mental health and emotional intelligence. I consider that now I am a little more empathetic and I can see the other as a human being who can find in me a friend, daughter, sister. I think that, despite the imperfections of the human being, in each person there is a set of qualities, virtues and abilities that make life much better. I believe that in Colombia there is a lot of need both physical and spiritual and that we must begin to carry out small actions and I want to be part of the change. The church must reflect the love of Christ outside the four walls and must continue to promote biblical principles.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Ahora me conozco un poco más, soy consciente de que necesito desarrollar disciplinas de auto cuidado, de salud mental e inteligencia emocional. Considero que ahora soy un poco más empática y puedo ver al otro como ese ser humano que en mí puede encontrar una amiga, hija, hermana. Pienso que, a pesar de las imperfecciones del ser humano, en cada persona hay un conjunto de cualidades, virtudes y habilidades*

que hacen que la vida sea mucho mejor. Considero que en Colombia hay mucha necesidad tanto física como espiritual y que hay que empezar a realizar pequeñas acciones y yo quiero ser parte del cambio. La iglesia debe reflejar el amor de Cristo a fuera de las cuatro paredes y debe seguir promoviendo los principios bíblicos,

Future Plans: When I return home, I plan to spend time with my family and friends, then get involved again in church ministries, locally and regionally, putting my gifts and talents into practice through teaching others. I would also like to participate more actively in the missions. At a professional level I want to join my role as a teacher again and do national volunteering on some occasions.

Planes Futuros: Cuando regrese a casa pienso compartir tiempo con mi familia y amigos, posteriormente involucrarme nuevamente en los ministerios de la iglesia, a nivel local y regional, poniendo mis dones y talentos en practica a través de la enseñanza a otros. También me gustaría participar de una forma más activa en las misiones. A nivel profesional quiero incorporarme nuevamente a mi rol de docente y hacer voluntariados nacionales en algunas ocasiones.

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Mario Hernández (Honduras)

Project Assistant, St. Joseph Parish Social Center
Santa Cruz, Bolivia



First Impression or Differences:

At first, I noticed some differences with my own country. The cultural clothing, the markets, the different accents and dialects that were heard in the squares or markets, public transportation. I was also able to notice the issue of safety, drinking water and I was impressed to see such a large city full of trees.

Primera impresión o diferencias: Al principio notaba algunas diferencias respecto a mi país. Las vestimentas culturales, los mercados, los diferentes acentos y dialectos que se escuchaban en las plazas o mercados, el transporte público; también pude notar el tema de seguridad, el agua potable y me impresionaba ver una ciudad tan grande y llena de árboles.

Memorable or Funny Experience: One of my memorable experiences was the trip we took as a YALT team through three different cities. We got to know Potosí, a city with so much history, which I was excited to discover; we got to know El Salar de Uyuni, a unique place in the world; and also finally we visited the capital of Bolivia, Sucre. It was a trip that I will never forget, full of interesting experiences and fun moments, traveling by bus for more than 40 hours in total.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Una de mis experiencias memorables fue el viaje que hicimos como equipo YALT por tres ciudades diferentes. Conocimos Potosí una ciudad con tanta historia, de la cual estaba emocionado por conocer; conocimos el Salar de Uyuni, un lugar único en el mundo; y también por último conocimos la capital de Bolivia, Sucre. Fue un viaje que nunca olvidaré, lleno de experiencias interesantes y momentos divertidos, viajando en bus por más de 40 horas en total.

Faith Journey: My volunteering has been a step higher in my faith, certainly God has been in every moment of my process. I have been able to experience and learn new things about my faith, and I have also been able to see the face of Jesus in the people around me, in their courage, love and passion with which they do their work for children and vulnerable people. I have such significant experiences for my life, which motivated my willingness to continue growing in my faith and service.

Viaje de fe: Mi voluntariado ha sido un escalón más arriba en mi fe, ciertamente Dios ha estado en cada momento de mi proceso. He podido experimentar y aprender cosas nuevas sobre mi fe, así mismo he podido ver el rostro de Jesús en la gente, en la valentía, el amor y la pasión con la que hacen su trabajo por los niños y las personas vulnerables. Llevo experiencias tan significativas para mi vida, las cuales motivan mi voluntad a seguir creciendo en mi fe y servicio.

Career/professional Development: My volunteering has greatly influenced my future aspirations. Being able to learn from others, discovering skills that I did not know about myself, and being challenged to learn things to improve my work, have motivated my willingness to continue training myself and studying in areas that will continue to develop my professional side and my call to service. Creating short medium- and long-term goals, having visions about future experiences and future projects.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: Mi voluntariado ha influido mucho en cuanto a mis aspiraciones a futuro, el poder aprender de los demás, el descubrir habilidades que no conocía de mí mismo, y el ser desafiado a aprender cosas para mejorar mi trabajo, han motivado mi voluntad para seguir capacitándome y estudiando en áreas que harán que siga desarrollando mi lado profesional y mi llamado al servicio. Creando metas a mediano y largo plazo, teniendo visiones sobre futuras experiencias y futuros proyectos.

New Perspectives: My experience has represented many changes on my perspectives, changes that have been developed through my experiences with the people, the culture, the community and the children with whom I have worked and shared. It has been a time in which I have made many reflections. I think that through my service with MCC, I have learned many things about

myself, about the things I can and cannot do. Learning to give the best of myself in what I can give and do; that I should do it with love and patience, it's part of the reflections on myself that I have learned here. My perspectives on people, on culture, on different ways of thinking, on different ways of living the faith have been enriched. I have learned a lot about the Andean worldview and about the Catholic Church, being open to learning has allowed me to connect with people and with parts of my faith that I had not reflected on. Knowing that even a bigger country, that has more infrastructure and better security or perhaps a better economy than mine, still has many problems like the ones that most Latinos suffer. It motivates me to continue working and thinking with hope, for the changes that my country also needs. Working and getting to know the work that MCC partners do in Bolivia has also motivated me to think about the urgent needs of my country, and to think about what I can significantly contribute to improve those realities. And regarding my church, I have thought a lot about everything I have learned, about the reflections that I have made, that perhaps it is somewhat challenging to share them when I return, but that I am also aware that we are walking and learning together.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Mi experiencia ha representado muchos cambios en mis perspectivas, cambios que se han desarrollado a través de mis experiencias con las personas, la cultura, la comunidad y los niño/as con las cuales he trabajado y compartido. Ha sido un tiempo en el cual he hecho muchas reflexiones. Creo que luego de mi servicio con CCM, he aprendido cosas sobre mí mismo, sobre las cosas que puedo y las que no puedo hacer. Aprender a dar lo mejor de ti mismo en lo que puedes dar y hacer, hacerlo con amor y paciencia, es una de las reflexiones sobre mí mismo que he aprendido. Mis perspectivas sobre las personas, sobre la cultura, sobre las diferentes formas de pensar, sobre las diferentes formas de vivir la fe. Estas han sido enriquecidas, he aprendido mucho sobre la cosmovisión Andina y sobre la iglesia católica, y al estar abierto a aprender, ha hecho que pueda conectar con las personas y con partes de mi fe en la cuales no había reflexionado. El saber que aún en un país más grande, con más infraestructura, con mejor seguridad o tal vez con una mejor economía que el mío, tenga muchos problemas como los cuales la mayoría de latinos sufren. Me motiva a seguir trabajando y pensando con esperanza, por los cambios que también mi país necesita. El estar trabajando y conociendo el trabajo que hacen los socios de CCM en Bolivia, ha motivado también en pensar sobre las necesidades urgentes de mi país, y pensar sobre lo que puedo aportar significativamente en mejorar esas realidades. Y con respecto a mi iglesia, he pensado mucho sobre todo lo que he aprendido, sobre las reflexiones que he hecho, que tal vez sea algo desafiante compartirlas al regreso, pero que también soy consciente que vamos caminando y aprendiendo juntos.*

Future Plans: When I return home, I plan to finish college and continue training myself. What I have learned with my volunteering I plan to share with my church and community. One of the visions that we have proposed with some of the young people in my church is to create or present a social project initiative. I believe that my experience could also contribute to future projects in my church, but I also want to share my cultural experience, which can generate important reflections on the role of the church, on cultures and different worldviews.

Planes Futuros: *Cuando regrese a casa pienso terminar la Universidad y seguir capacitándome. Lo que he aprendido con mi voluntariado, pienso compartirlo con mi iglesia y comunidad. Una de las visiones que nos hemos propuesto con algunos de los jóvenes en mi iglesia, es en crear o presentar una iniciativa de proyecto social. Creo que mi experiencia también podría aportar a futuros proyectos en mi iglesia, pero también deseo compartir mi experiencia cultural, la cual puede generar reflexiones importantes sobre el rol de la iglesia, sobre las culturas y las diferentes cosmovisiones.*

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Jacksha Jackson (Malawi)

Conservation and Food Security Program Assistant,
Cambodia Rural Development Team (CRDT)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia



First Impression or Differences:

When I first got to Cambodia it was at night and I didn't see much. After getting tested for COVID-19 we went straight to the hotel, but on our way just looking through the window on the bus the city was so beautiful. The first food I had at the hotel I really don't remember the name, but it came with soup which was my first time seeing a lot of water with some vegetables in it and some meat being called soup. Since I was alone I had to search on Google to know what it was and how to eat it. The food that I was given had sugar in it, it was difficult for me to eat but after some time I got used to it.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Cuando llegué a Camboya por primera vez, era de noche y no vi mucho, así que después de hacerme la prueba de Covid 19 fuimos directamente al hotel, pero en el camino, solo mirando por la ventana del autobús, la ciudad era tan hermosa. La primera comida que comí en el hotel realmente no le recuerdo el nombre, pero era con sopa, fue la primera vez que vi que llamaran sopa a mucha agua con algunas verduras y algunas carnes, como estaba sola tuve que buscar en Google para saber que era y como comerla. La comida que me dieron tenía azúcar, me costaba comerla, pero después de un tiempo me acostumbré.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: I went to Mondulkiri province in the district of Kaoh Nheak, a buon village, it was the first time that the farmers there saw a black person and I have gotten many funny reactions. But this time it was far different from the other reactions that I have had, the people had a lot of questions to ask and one of them was asking if where I came from is very hot. This was because they thought people in Africa are black because it's too hot, so I had good time telling them about my country and answering all their questions.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Fui a la provincia de Mondulkiri en el distrito de Kaoh Nheak, pueblo de A-buon, era la primera vez que los granjeros veían a una persona negra y obtuve muchas reacciones graciosas, pero esta vez fue muy diferente de las otras reacciones que he tenido. La gente tenía muchas preguntas que hacer y una de ellas era si de donde yo venía hacía mucho calor, esto fue porque pensaban que las personas en África son negras porque hace demasiado calor, así que pasé un buen rato contándoles sobre mi país. Y respondiéndoles a todas sus preguntas.*

Faith Journey: Coming to Cambodia and living among people here made my faith stronger than before. I met some of the Christians around me and some shared their testimonies and talked about different things of what their Christian life is like. These stories made me realize how lucky and blessed I am that I can pray and worship back home without anything stopping me. This made me worship differently and build my faith to be strong because I realized I don't have anything to stop me from doing so.

Viaje de fe: *Venir a Camboya y vivir entre la gente hizo que mi fe fuera más fuerte que antes, conocí a algunos de los cristianos a mi alrededor y algunos compartieron sus testimonios y hablaron sobre diferentes cosas, en cuanto a su vida cristiana, estas historias me hicieron dar cuenta de lo afortunada y bendecida que soy al poder orar y adorar en casa sin que nada me detenga, así que esto me hizo adorar de manera diferente y fortalecer mi fe porque me di cuenta de que no tengo nada que me impida hacerlo.*

Career/Professional Development: During my job I have been exposed to farming in a lot of ways so I have something in me now that I didn't have before which is a heart to change some other things through farming.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Durante mi trabajo he estado expuesta a la agricultura de muchas maneras, así que ahora tengo algo en mí que no tenía antes, que es un corazón para cambiar algunas otras cosas a través de la agricultura.*

New Perspectives: To say the truth when I was coming to Cambodia I was nervous about how I am going to

live here because I heard a lot of stories of how black people are treated in Asia. But coming here it was really different, the people are just too friendly and loving so that made me realize that the stories might be true but it's not all Asian countries.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *A decir verdad, cuando vine a Camboya, estaba nerviosa sobre cómo iba a vivir aquí porque escuché muchas historias sobre cómo se trata a los negros en Asia, pero venir aquí fue realmente diferente, la gente es demasiado amigable. y tan amorosa que me hizo dar cuenta de que las historias pueden ser ciertas, pero no en todos los países asiáticos.*

Future Plans: I am thinking of giving farming a try, going back to school to get my degree and going back to work.

Planes Futuros: *Estoy pensando en probar la agricultura, volver a la escuela para obtener mi título y volver a trabajar.*

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Sunil Kadmaset (India)

Youth Program Facilitator, Mennonite World Conference Semarang, Indonesia



First Impression or Differences: If here in Indonesia I compare with my home country, then there is a lot of differences. That's what I can say specifically that about the congregation's pattern, hospitality, living life, foods etc.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Si comparo Indonesia con mi país de origen, entonces hay muchas diferencias, eso es lo que puedo decir específicamente sobre la cultura de la Congregación, la hospitalidad, la vida, los alimentos, etc.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: This is my first time to go out from my country and flying on a plane, really this is beyond my imagination so I'm so grateful to my loving heavenly father God and MWC. It will be my indelible memory.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Esta es la primera vez que salgo de mi país y vuelo en un avión, realmente esto fue más allá de mi imaginación, así que estoy muy agradecida con mi amoroso padre celestial Dios y CMM. Será mi recuerdo indeleble.*

Faith Journey: Yeah, I was having difficulties and struggles in my faith, but I would like to thank my Indian host family Mrs. Monika and Joybont in Joggdeshpur, Chhattisgarh. Every day we were having

devotion in morning and evening. There my host father and mother would teach me the word of God so when I would get from them, I was getting for myself a sense of comfort and relief and it created and shaped me into unshakeable faith.

Viaje de fe: *Sí, he tenido dificultades y luchas en mi fe, pero me gustaría agradecer a mi familia anfitriona india, la Sra. Monika y Joybont en Joggdeshpur, Chhattisgarh. Todos los días tuvimos devocionales por la mañana y por la tarde allí, mi padre y mi madre anfitriones me enseñaron de la Palabra de Dios, así que cuando recibía de ellos, tenía una sensación de consuelo y alivio y eso me creó/formó en una fe inquebrantable.*

Career/Professional Development: When I was working under Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India (MCSFI) we had a trip to visit with Rev. Benjamin Nand (director), Ma'am Cynthia, Bishop Bijoy Kumar Raul (Chairman of BICC) and others in the project area and churches of my own conference Brethren in Christ Church where they are having a Tribal Food Security project. I especially was inspired by kitchen gardening there, some skills I gained from some beneficiary so in my future definitely I will apply that skill.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Cuando trabajaba para Fraternidad Menonita de Servicio Cristiano de la India (MCSFI), tuvimos un viaje para visitar al reverendo Benjamin Nand (director), la señora Cynthia, el obispo Bijoy Kumar Raul (presidente de BICC) y otras áreas de proyectos e iglesias. En mi propia conferencia Hermanos de la Iglesia de Cristo donde tengo un proyecto de Seguridad Alimentaria Tribal, especialmente me inspiré en la horticultura allí, una habilidad que obtuve de algún Beneficiario, así que en mi futuro definitivamente aplicaré esa habilidad.*

New Perspectives: First of all, I will be confident in myself, my church members and others to share God's love and unity so that they may come closer to God. And I will encourage them for maintaining health and preventing disease through cleanliness.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *En primer lugar, confiaré en mí mismo, en los miembros de mi iglesia y en los demás para compartir el amor de Dios y la unidad, de modo que puedan acercarse a Dios. Y les animaré a mantener la salud y prevenir las enfermedades mediante la limpieza*

Future Plans: When I will go back to my own country I will share my new experience with my Church, community, family and friend circles. Especially I'm from a village so I know very well that village parents are not interested to give education their children and some young people are addicted to alcohol so I will put more importance to them and encourage them for their good life.

Planes Futuros: *Cuando regrese a mi propio país, compartiré mi nueva experiencia con mis círculos de la Iglesia, la Comunidad, la Familia y los Amigos. Dado que soy de un pueblo, así que sé muy bien que los padres de la gente del pueblo no están interesados en dar educación a sus hijos y algunos jóvenes son adictos al alcohol, por lo que les daré más importancia y los alentaré para que tengan una buena vida.*

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Mudimka Kassam (Nigeria)

Youth and English Assistant,
Americas Unidas Secondary School
La Mesa, Colombia



First Impression or Differences:

The welcoming smile and friendliness I was shown right from the airport gave me some confidence of comfort, even though I was very surprised that a lot of people don't speak or understand English. Although the food wasn't as spicy as that in my home

country the soups were really good because they kept me warm and so I opt for soups literally during every meal.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Primeras impresiones o diferencias: la sonrisa de bienvenida y la amabilidad que me mostraron desde el aeropuerto me dieron cierta confianza y comodidad, aunque me sorprendió mucho que muchas personas no hablaran ni entendieran inglés. Aunque la comida no era tan picante como en mi país de origen, las sopas eran realmente buenas porque me mantenían caliente, así que opto por sopas literalmente en cada comida.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: Every moment has been a memorable experience while in Colombia, yet my most cherished moment was when my host parent and I traveled to San Joaquín to celebrate the Christmas festival with the kids over there. My host parents and I prepared a Colombian dish called "Lechuga" in the house, bought some gifts and packaged them so that it will be shared with all the kids. We worked through the night to get everything fixed with my host dad cracking jokes and making us laugh out so loud. We sang, danced a little of Colombia and Nigerian dance steps and ate together. My host parent and I served the kids and shared the gifts packaged to all of them. Seeing them happy and the smiles of hope on their pretty faces gave me peace and the reason to hold up the light to those in need, even when the candle seems to run out, because the flawless beauty of their joy at that particular moment lightened my time in Colombia and gave me a new spark of happiness and joy.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Cada momento ha sido una experiencia memorable mientras estuve en Colombia, pero mi momento más preciado fue cuando mi padre anfitrión y yo viajamos a San Joaquín para celebrar el festival de Navidad con los niños allí. Mis padres anfitriones y yo preparamos un platillo colombiano llamado “Lechona” en la casa, compramos algunos regalos y los envolvimos para luego compartirlos con todos los niños. Trabajamos toda la noche para arreglar todo con mi padre anfitrión bromeando y haciéndonos reír a carcajadas. Cantamos, bailamos un poco de música colombiana y pasos de baile nigerianos y comimos juntos. Mi padre anfitrión y yo servimos a los niños y compartimos los regalos envueltos para todos ellos. Verlos felices y las sonrisas de esperanza en sus lindos rostros me dio paz y la razón para sostener la luz a los necesitados incluso cuando la vela parece agotarse porque la belleza impecable de su alegría en ese momento en particular aligeró mi tiempo en Colombia y me dio una nueva chispa de felicidad y alegría.*

Faith Journey: Coming from a big church with different dancing steps and cultures worshiping together made adapting to a new culture and mode of worship a little challenging as dancing isn't encouraged in the church here. This has been abused and so it is seen as a “bad thing” to do in the church even though I always want to dance. My faith grew as the time spins and I saw worship with a different understanding of God's love, grace and wonders. My faith journey taught me that our lives may have been molded by different doctrines and theologies, but the ultimate doctrine still remains the Holy Bible. I learned LOVE, VALUE and HUMILITY. Working with my host father who is also the pastor of the Mennonite church in La Mesa taught me that “title is who people think you are, but your character is who you are” and the love and value you accord others, the same will be reciprocated to you. And finally, my faith was stretched when God helped me to see that coming from different homes, background, class and race isn't a barrier because his elastic band of DIVINE LOVE binds us all together.

Viaje de fe: *Venir de una iglesia grande con diferentes pasos de baile y culturas que adoran juntas hizo que adoptar una nueva cultura y modo de adoración fuera un poco desafiante ya que no se fomenta el baile en la iglesia. Se ha abusado de esto, por lo que se ve como algo “malo” en la iglesia, aunque siempre quiero bailar. Mi fe creció a medida que pasaba el tiempo y me expuse a ver y adorar a Dios con una comprensión diferente de su amor, gracia y maravillas. Mi jornada de fe me enseñó que nuestras vidas pueden haber sido moldeadas por diferentes doctrinas y teologías, pero la doctrina fundamental sigue siendo la Santa Biblia. Aprendí AMOR, VALOR y HUMILDAD. Trabajar con mi padre anfitrión, quien también es el pastor de la iglesia menonita en La Mesa, me enseñó que “el título es lo*

que la gente piensa que eres, pero tu carácter es lo que eres” y el amor y el valor que les das a los demás, serán recíprocos. para ti. Y finalmente, mi fe dio un estirón cuando Dios me ayudó a ver que venir de diferentes hogares, orígenes, clases y razas no es una barrera porque Su banda elástica de AMOR DIVINO nos une a todos.

Career/Professional Development: I have learned more teaching and communication methods, as well as effective leadership and conflict management between students, parents and the school, between youths and so on. Teaching requires patience, understanding and resilience and I think my students taught me more than I taught them as they displayed all these qualities when my Spanish wasn't good enough to be able to communicate my ideas fluently to them. That strengthened my understanding of teaching and learning because to be a good teacher, one must first be willing to be an attentive learner. I learned to be considerate and believe in others even when they seem to have lost hope in themselves.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *He aprendido más métodos de enseñanza y comunicación, así como liderazgo efectivo y manejo de conflictos entre alumnos, padres y la escuela, entre jóvenes, etc. La enseñanza requiere paciencia, comprensión y resiliencia y creo que mis estudiantes me enseñaron más de lo que yo les enseñé, ya que mostraron todas estas cualidades cuando mi español no era lo suficientemente bueno como para poder comunicarles mis ideas con fluidez y eso fortaleció mi comprensión de la enseñanza y aprender para poder ser un buen maestro, primero hay que estar dispuesto a ser un aprendiz atento. Aprender a ser considerado y creer en los demás incluso cuando parecen haber perdido la esperanza en sí mismos.*

New Perspectives: I realized that the number of people in need are more than the people that are helping the needy and I can never stop doing good and reaching out to the needy. Even though I might not be able to change the whole world I can be able to change the world of one person. Before every night, there is always a bright day. This experience taught me that the little act of kindness that puts a smile on someone's face or lights up hope in their tomorrow is a blessing worth a lifetime, and that love is the only “virus” that can contaminate people's heart and still keep them healthy.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Me di cuenta de que la cantidad de personas necesitadas es mayor que la de las personas que ayudan a los necesitados y nunca puedo dejar de hacer el bien y ayudar a los necesitados, aunque no pueda cambiar el mundo entero, pero puedo ser capaz de cambiar el mundo de a una persona a la vez, pues antes de cada noche, siempre hay un día brillante. Esta experiencia me enseñó que el pequeño acto de bondad que pone una sonrisa en el rostro de alguien o ilumina*

la esperanza en su mañana es una bendición que vale la pena toda la vida y el amor es el único “virus” que puede contaminar el corazón de las personas y aún así mantenerlos saludables.

Future Plans: I plan to go back to university and study medicine. I want to teach what I know as well as help to save lives of especially the less privileged.

Planes Futuros: Planeo volver a la universidad y estudiar medicina. Quiero enseñar lo que sé y ayudar a salvar vidas, especialmente a los menos privilegiados.

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Jenny Keang (Cambodia)

Childcare and Administrative Assistant, Barrackpore Avenue Women’s Culture & Social Welfare Society West Bengal State, India.



First Impression or Differences: I didn’t expect Indian people to eat spicy foods. And culture shock, I saw different Hindu god statues. God doesn’t have a body, some have tongues come out, some have many hands.

Primera impresión o diferencias:

No esperaba que la gente de la India comiera alimentos picantes. Y el choque cultural, vi diferentes estatus de dioses hindúes. Dios no tiene un cuerpo, otros tienen la lengua de fuera, algunos tienen muchas manos.

Memorable or Funny Experience: One day, I accidentally ate a sweet mixture with rice. At that time, I thought it was a chicken meat because it looked like chicken soup. After I mix with rice. Oh my, that was so sweet and sour and everyone at home laugh at me :)

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Un día comí accidentalmente una mezcla dulce con arroz. En ese momento, pensé que era carne con pollo. Porque se parecía a la sopa de pollo. Después de mezclarlo con el arroz. Oh, Dios mío, era tan agri dulce y todos en casa se reían de mí :)

Faith Journey: I struggled with the devil’s attack at night time one day at my place that I stayed. I shared this story to the home staffs. I didn’t fear ghosts. I pray and I break the evil’s hand. I told them that I am more powerful than ghosts because I am a daughter of God. My Lord gives me this authority. I shared how powerful Jesus Christ is to them. Everyone paid attention and listened to me.

Viaje de fe: Estaba luchando con un ataque de demonios una noche, en mi casa anfitriona. Yo estaba compartiendo esta historia con mi familia. Yo no tengo miedo de los fantasmas. Oré y rompí la atadura de los demonios. Les dije que soy más poderosa que los fantasmas, porque soy una hija de Dios. Mi señor me da esta autoridad. Y les dije lo poderoso que es Jesucristo a la par de ellos. Todos me prestaban atención y me escuchaban.

Career/Professional Development: I have learned many new skills of social work and did different kinds of projects. I think it is helpful and benefits me.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: He aprendido muchas nuevas habilidades para proyectos sociales y de diferentes tipos de proyectos. Creo que ha sido útil y beneficioso para mí.

New Perspectives: After my year serving in a cross-cultural service, I saw myself change in a better way, develop a lot and have more value. I have realized that I could do many things on my own, I have never thought that I could do all of that while I was in my home country. My family and my friends they see me the same way that I see myself now. They are proud of me that I could go far away from home and still have courage to complete my assignments here in India.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Después de mi año sirviendo en una experiencia intercultural, me veo cambiada de una manera mejor. Con más desarrollo y más valor. Me he dado cuenta de que puedo hacer muchas cosas por mi cuenta, lo que nunca pensé que podría hacer mientras estaba en mi país. Mi familia y mis amigos me ven de la misma manera que yo me veo ahora. Ellos están orgullosos de mí por haber podido ir lejos de casa y seguir teniendo valor para completar mis tareas aquí en la India.

Future Plans: I hope I can work for an NGO or any Christian organization in the future. I will share the knowledge that I have learned in the mission to better serve my country.

Planes Futuros: Espero poder trabajar para una ONG o cualquier organización cristiana en el futuro. Compartiré los conocimientos que he aprendido en este servicio para servir mejor a mi país.

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Finna Kristanto (Indonesia)

Teacher and Community Worker,
Sheela Thiessen/Aron Jantzen Memorial School
Rajnandgaon, India



First Impression or Differences:

Somehow, most of things here feel same because my host and home countries both are part of Asia. But still, they have their own vibes and way to take care of things. But first thing first is I'm feeling warm! I love people here, their gestures, especially how they care

so they will do it all out. Then, honks! They use honks very often here. In my home country, we use honks to greet people, so initially I turn my head once I heard the honk here, but slowly I can adjust 😊. One more thing that made me a little startled while I was learning Hindi. Hindi and Bahasa have some words with slightly different ways to pronounce but have same meaning because India and Indonesian are influenced by Sanskrit.

Primera impresión o diferencias: De alguna manera, la mayor parte de las cosas aquí se sienten igual porque mi país anfitrión y mi país de origen, ambos son parte de Asia. Pero aún así, tienen sus propias vibraciones y formas de cuidar las cosas. ¡Pero lo primero es que me siento cálida! Me encanta la gente de aquí, sus cuidados, sobre todo como se preocupan y toman cuidado de todo. También, ¡los bocinazos! usan la bocina muy a menudo aquí. En mi país de origen, usamos bocinazos para saludar a las personas, así que inicialmente giro la cabeza una vez que escucho el bocinazo aquí, pero poco a poco me pude adaptar. 😊 Una cosa más que me sorprendió un poco mientras estaba aprendiendo hindi. El hindi y el bahasa tienen algunas palabras con una forma de pronunciar ligeramente diferente, pero tienen el mismo significado porque India e Indonesia tienen influencia del sánscrito.

Memorable or Funny Experience: It was during Christmas season. I experienced how to welcome Christmas differently with the youth community here. We did carol singing door to door in every house of church members. For a whole week before Christmas Day (Dec 25th), every evening we start roaming. After we reached one house, we sang, had some snacks, prayed, shouted 'Bara Din, Mubarak Ho!' then moved to another house. On the last day, the activity was ending in my host family's home around 1 am on December 25th. I learnt so many Hindi Christmas songs. It was fun and I miss it already.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Durante la época navideña, experimenté cómo dar la bienvenida a la Navidad de manera diferente con la comunidad de jóvenes aquí. Cantamos villancicos de puerta en puerta,

en todas las casas de los miembros de la iglesia. Durante toda una semana antes del día de Navidad (25 de diciembre), todas las noches empezamos a deambular. Después de llegar a una casa, cantamos, tomamos un refrigerio, oramos, y gritamos '¡Bara Din, Mubarak Ho!', luego nos mudamos a otra casa. En el último día, la actividad terminaba en la casa de mi familia anfitriona alrededor de la 1 am del 25 de diciembre. Aprendí tantas canciones navideñas en hindi. Fue divertido y ya lo extraño.

Faith Journey: Back then, when I was waiting for this journey, I was counting month by month which became year by year, and it made me ask why I should wait this much. Today, I realize why I had a long waiting season, three years of waiting for less than one year's journey is worth it. God was preparing me well even for a short journey. It's not about how long I was serving, but he wanted me to have a meaningful journey. Now, I can see how thoughtful he is, including his perfect timing to make me go this far because I was witnessing his good timing over and over again during the preparation. While I'm serving in my place I can see how God prepared everything perfectly, belonging with his protection as one package.

Viaje de fe: Antes, cuando estaba esperando este viaje, estaba contando mes a mes y año tras año y me hizo preguntarme por qué debería esperar tanto. Hoy me doy cuenta del por qué tuve una larga temporada de espera, tres años de espera por menos de un año de viaje valen la pena. Dios me estaba preparando bien incluso para un viaje corto. No se trata de cuánto tiempo serviré, pero Él quiere que tenga un viaje significativo. Ahora, puedo ver cuán meticuloso es Él, incluyendo Su momento perfecto para hacerme llegar tan lejos porque fui testigo de su buen momento una y otra vez durante la preparación. Mientras estoy sirviendo en mi lugar, puedo ver cómo Dios prepara todo perfectamente, pertenece a Su protección como un solo paquete.

Career/Professional Development: Professionally I'm not a teacher, but I have a desire to know more about parenting and psychology. Here, I learn more about how to approach people and understand them better. So, I can fix how I will communicate with people when I do my professional job and I am equipped to fulfill my wish to help abandoned children along with hurt people around me.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: Profesionalmente no soy docente, pero tengo el deseo de saber más sobre crianza y psicología. Aquí, estoy aprendiendo más sobre cómo acercarme a las personas y entenderlas mejor. Entonces, puedo observar cómo me comunicaré con las personas cuando haga mi trabajo profesional y equiparme para cumplir mi deseo de ayudar a los niños abandonados, junto con las personas heridas que me rodean.

New Perspectives: I learned more to appreciate people choices, struggles, faiths and also their hearts. Actually, I also learned more about myself. How I value myself and how I see God. So, this journey also like a re-direction with a lot of new perspective to get back on the track. Also, my host family is best. While living with them, I'm learning so many new perspectives about parenting and meaning about family itself.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *He aprendido más a apreciar las elecciones, las luchas, las creencias de las personas y también sus corazones. En realidad, también he aprendido más sobre mí misma. Cómo me valoro a mí misma y cómo veo a Dios como. Entonces, este viaje también es como una nueva dirección con muchas nuevas perspectivas para volver a la pista. Además, mi familia anfitriona es la mejor. Mientras vivo con ellos, aprendo muchas nuevas perspectivas sobre la crianza de los hijos y el significado de la familia en sí.*

Future Plans: I will search opportunities and work hard to fulfil my desire for abandoned children. Also wherever I go, I will be actively involved in youth community, especially in my church congregation to share my experiences with them for encouraging through testimony of all God's goodness.

Planes Futuros: *oportunidades y trabajaré duro para cumplir mi deseo por los niños abandonados. Además, dondequiera que vaya, participaré activamente en la comunidad de jóvenes, especialmente en la congregación de mi iglesia para compartir mis experiencias con ellos para alentarlos a través del testimonio de las bondades de Dios.*

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Natacha Wendyam Kyendrebeogo

(Burkina Faso)

French Language Resource Specialist,
Mennonite World Conference
Semarang, Indonesia



First Impression or Differences:

My first impression was the living and working layouts. We live and work in the same house, and we don't have to walk miles, or bike or take the bus to work which was not the case in my country where I started my assignment. Here, we live downstairs and work upstairs.

What is fascinating is at the office, i.e. upstairs, there is a balcony facing the outside of the house and it is very beautiful to see because in front of the house there is a lawn with beautiful flowers and a mango tree that make the view splendid. I like to stay on the balcony when I have a break, or on weekends and I enjoy walking around the house.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Mi primera impresión fue la disposición de estar y trabajar. Vivimos y trabajamos en la misma casa, y no tenemos que caminar millas, andar en bicicleta o tomar el autobús para ir al trabajo, lo cual no era el caso en mi país donde comencé mi asignación. Aquí, vivimos en el piso de abajo y trabajamos en el de arriba. Lo fascinante es que, en la oficina, es decir, arriba, hay un balcón que da al exterior de la casa y es muy bonito para ir y mirar, porque enfrente de la casa hay un césped con flores preciosas y un árbol de mango que hacen la vista espléndida, me gusta quedarme en el balcón cuando tengo un descanso, o los fines de semana y disfrutar mientras camino por la casa.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: A memorable experience for me was spending a night in immigration for not persuading those officers! It was my first time traveling internationally and my first time flying. Everything went well from my country until I arrived in Indonesia where, at immigration, there were some misunderstandings. I was taken to the house of denied entry. To go to the bathroom, I had to be accompanied. I had no access to buy food or drink because they took my passport and other documents. I remember that I asked the officer who was with me to help me find something to drink, but I didn't get any. The next day at 10 a.m. after verification I was released and was able to obtain water to drink and a hamburger. What I can't forget is the moment they told me I could leave, my whole body was shaking, and I didn't know if it was hunger, thirst or the joy of leaving.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *¡Una experiencia memorable para mí fue pasar una noche en inmigración por no persuadir a los oficiales! Era la primera vez que viajaba internacionalmente y la primera vez que volaba. Todo pasó bien desde que salí de mi país hasta que llegué a Indonesia donde, en inmigración, hubo algunos malentendidos. Me llevaron a la casa de entrada denegada. Para ir al baño, tenía que estar acompañada. No tuve acceso a comprar comida ni bebida porque me quitaron el pasaporte y otros documentos. Recuerdo que le pedí al oficial que me acompañara que me ayudara a buscar algo de beber, pero no conseguí nada. Al día siguiente a las 10 a.m. después de la verificación me dieron la salida y pude obtener agua para beber y una hamburguesa. Lo que no puedo olvidar es el momento en que me dijeron que podía irme, todo mi cuerpo temblaba y no sabía si era hambre, sed o la alegría de irme.*

Faith Journey: Here I learned to refresh my personal relationship with God, to pray and meditate on his word. My faith is growing, and I understand that wherever we are, God is always with us, and we just need to invoke his presence.

Viaje de fe: *Aquí aprendí a refrescar mi relación personal con Dios, a orar y meditar en su palabra. Mi fe va creciendo, y entiendo que donde quiera que estemos, Dios siempre está con nosotros, y solo necesitamos invocar su presencia.*

Career/Professional Development: I am learning a lot from my hometown to here in Indonesia. First, I can see my English improving because I am practicing it all the time. Also, I am learning more about teamwork, and I am starting to develop leadership skills, to be confident and more patient. One thing I have also learned and appreciate is to work lovingly and wholeheartedly without expecting a reward. I have learned to use several working programs such as the registration program, the image and video design program.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Estoy aprendiendo mucho desde mi ciudad natal hasta aquí en Indonesia. Primero, puedo ver que mi inglés mejora porque lo practico todo el tiempo. Además, estoy aprendiendo más sobre el trabajo en equipo y estoy empezando a desarrollar habilidades de liderazgo, a tener confianza y ser más paciente. Una cosa que también he aprendido y aprecio es trabajar con amor y de todo corazón sin esperar una recompensa. He aprendido a utilizar varios programas de trabajo como el programa de registro, el programa de diseño de imagen y video.*

New Perspectives: I am willing to remain patient, tolerant and humble towards everyone and to apply all the experiences I have gained into future teamwork and other new cross-cultural experiences. I would be willing to share what I have learned with others!

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Estoy dispuesta a seguir siendo paciente, tolerante y humilde con todos/as y aplicar todas las experiencias que he adquirido en el futuro trabajo en equipo y otras nuevas experiencias interculturales. ¡Estaría dispuesta a compartir lo que he aprendido con otros!*

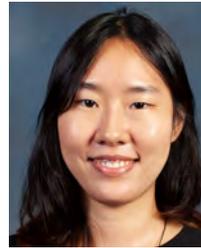
Future Plans: First, I will continue my studies and finish my degree in English and then pursue a degree in business communication. Also, I think I will look for a job in my spare time to be able to support my studies. I will be available to help others as I can.

Planes Futuros: *Primero, continuaré mis estudios y terminaré mi carrera en inglés y luego seguiré una carrera en comunicación empresarial. Además, creo que buscaré un trabajo en mi tiempo libre para poder apoyar mis estudios. Estaré disponible para ayudar a otros en lo que pueda.*

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Juyeong Lee (South Korea)

Refugee Program Assistant, Our Lady of Peace Centre
Children Protection Curriculum Maker, Caritas
Amman, Jordan



First Impression or Differences: It's not familiar to me at all because I never have experienced, even in TV or book, Middle East Culture. So when I got here, I was little bit nervous.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *No me era familiar en absoluto.*

Porque nunca tuve una experiencia, ni siquiera en la televisión o en un libro, sobre la cultura de Medio Oriente. Así que cuando llegué aquí, estaba un poco nervioso.

Memorable or Funny Experience: We have Turkish coffee which after you sip, there is left the powder in your coffee cup, but you don't need to eat that muddy coffee on the bottom of coffee. But I was confused if I should eat this muddy or not? And I just tried eat it.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Tuvimos café turco que después de sorber, queda el polvo en tu taza de café, pero no necesitas comer ese café fangoso en el fondo del café, pero me confundí, ¿debería comer esto fangoso o no? Y yo intenté comerlo.*

Faith Journey: When I met hard things, I accept that is hard for me and sad, and I need to pray and read Bible. That made me trust God more deeply.

Viaje de fe: *Cuando encuentro cosas difíciles para mí, acepto que es difícil para mí con tristeza, y necesito orar y leer la biblia. Eso me hizo confiar en Dios más profundamente.*

Career/Professional Development: I can feel now more about refugees than before. And how to understand them as a friend. I also learned how to not push and rush myself. I have to learn this, to be kind to myself.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Puedo sentir ahora más sobre "Refugio" que antes. Y cómo entenderlos como un amigo. También aprendí a no presionarme y apresurarme. Tengo que aprender esto, ser amable conmigo mismo.*

New Perspectives: Even different culture and language is not really barrier to befriend others. Small kindness is big thing.

Nuevas Perspectivas: Incluso la cultura y el idioma diferentes no son realmente una barrera para ser amigo de los demás. La pequeña amabilidad es una gran cosa.

Future Plans: I like to be with kids who need a safe place and time, I want to be there for them. I will keep learning my third language Arabic, I am so glad I have a good Arabic teacher. I will love small things more.

Planes Futuros: Me gusta estar con niños, que necesitan un lugar y tiempo seguro, quiero estar para ellos. Seguiré aprendiendo mi tercer idioma, árabe, estoy muy contenta de tener un buen profesor de árabe. Amaré más las cosas pequeñas.

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Anupama Mandi (India)

Health Educator, Olepolos Health Dispensary
Olepolos, Kenya



First Impression or Differences: Impressions—people here are very welcoming and good from the heart. They are very respectful to me. Staying in a rural area with a paucity of basic amenities including electricity is very tough. There is also the presence of a language barrier and the living condition of the day to day life is very challenging.

Primera impresión o diferencias: Impresiones: la gente aquí es muy acogedora y buena de corazón. Son muy respetuosos conmigo. Permanecer en una zona rural con escasez de servicios básicos, incluida la electricidad, es muy difícil. También existe la presencia de una barrera del idioma y las condiciones de vida del día a día son muy desafiantes.

Memorable or Funny Experience: I can recall a memorable moment where I was able to execute my medical knowledge in providing critical care to an 84-year-old patient who had a cardiac arrest. At that very tense moment I had to provide CPR and give emergency medicines so as to revive the patient and later took him to the hospital where by God's grace his life was saved. And for the funny part, I would like to mention that when that same person was discharged fit from the hospital, he came back and he hugged me in gratitude and cried his heart out and spat on my head. I later came to know that this spitting act is considered as the most respectable gesture in Masai culture to bless a person. So it was funny as well as an honor to receive such respect and love from the community where I am currently serving.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: Puedo recordar un momento memorable en el que pude ejecutar mi conocimiento médico al brindar atención crítica a un paciente de 84 años que tuvo un paro cardíaco. En ese momento tan tenso tuve que darle resucitación cardiopulmonar y dar medicinas de emergencia para revivir al paciente y luego lo llevé al Hospital donde por la gracia de Dios se salvó su vida. Y para la parte divertida, me gustaría mencionar que cuando esa misma persona fue dada de alta del hospital, regresó y me abrazó en señal de gratitud, lloró con todo su corazón y me escupió en la cabeza. Más tarde supe que este acto de escupir se considera el gesto más respetable en la "Cultura Masai" para bendecir a una persona. Así que fue divertido y un honor recibir tanto respeto y amor de dicha comunidad en la que estoy sirviendo actualmente.

Faith Journey: While in India during the pandemic as I was designated as a nurse in a COVID ward working 24-7, my quiet time with God was drastically reduced due to immense work pressure. But, as I am here I am able to revive my quiet time with God and even got closer to knowing his plans and have time to read the Bible as well and visit the local church every Sunday. This has helped to rejuvenate my faith and helped me to become stronger in Christ every single day.

Viaje de fe: Mientras estaba en India durante la pandemia, cuando fui designada como enfermera en una sala de Covid trabajando 24/7, mi tiempo de soledad con Dios se redujo drásticamente debido a la inmensa presión laboral. Pero, como estoy aquí, puedo revivir bastante de mi tiempo con Dios e incluso me acerqué a conocer sus planes y tengo tiempo para leer la Biblia también y visitar la Iglesia local todos los domingos. Esto ha ayudado a rejuvenecer mi fe para volverme más fuerte en Cristo cada día.

Career/Professional Development: Being an ICU nurse who has always worked in a hospital primarily in a city, it was a great privilege for me to experience firsthand to serve in a community i.e. the Masai Community. I learned the real picture of how life survives in utmost tough conditions and still there is hope. I was able to work in immunization and the antenatal ward which added to my experience.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: He sido Enfermera de UCI, siempre había trabajado en un Hospital principalmente en una Ciudad. Fue un gran privilegio para mí experimentar de primera mano, servir en una Comunidad, es decir, "Comunidad Masai". Aprendí la imagen real de cómo la vida sobrevive en las condiciones más difíciles y todavía hay esperanza. Pude trabajar en la sala de inmunización y prenatal, lo que se sumó a mi experiencia.

New Perspectives: What I have experienced is that people here are very welcoming. Women here especially, are independent and broadminded. They are also given high respect. On the contrary, India being a male dominated society, most of the woman have to depend on their father or husband. So, I have learned to be more independent and lead my life according to my terms and be able to stand firm on my own feet.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Lo que he experimentado es que la gente aquí es muy acogedora. Las mujeres aquí especialmente son independientes y de mente abierta. También se les da un gran respeto. Por el contrario, siendo India una sociedad dominada por hombres, la mayoría de las mujeres tienen que depender de su padre o esposo. Entonces, he aprendido a ser más Independiente y llevar mi Vida de acuerdo con mis términos y ser capaz de mantenerme firme sobre mis propios pies.*

Future Plans: I would initiate a counselling initiative to share my experiences of sharing and caring in my church and local community. The medical and social experiences that I have learned here in my serving community, I would incorporate them in my nursing service in India. Lastly, if I get further opportunity in MCC to serve the people, I would love to do it.

Planes Futuros: *Iniciaré una iniciativa de consejería para conocer mis experiencias de Compartir y Cuidar en mi Iglesia y Comunidad Local. Las experiencias Médicas y Sociales que he aprendido aquí en mi Comunidad de servicio, las incorporaré en mi servicio de Enfermería en la India. Por último, si tengo más oportunidades en CCM para servir a la gente, me encantaría hacerlo.*

Disha Masih (India)

Disability Equity Program Assistant,
Prey Veng Female Disabled Federation
Prey Veng, Cambodia



First Impression or Differences:
Nervous or excited for everything.

Primera impresión o diferencias:
Nerviosa o emocionada por todo.

Memorable or Funny Experience:
First time flying in airplane

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Primera vez volando en Avión.*

Faith Journey: In Cambodia because of COVID most of time churches are closed so I never visited a lot, but mostly I pray and read Bible at home.

Viaje de fe: *En Camboya, debido a Covid, la mayor parte del tiempo las iglesias están cerradas, por lo que nunca visité mucho, pero sobre todo oro y leo la Biblia en casa.*

Career/Professional Development: Career wise or professionally I could not explore that but one thing I learned is patience.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *En cuanto a la carrera o profesionalmente, no pude explorar eso, pero una cosa que aprendí es la paciencia.*

New Perspectives: Now I can do everything alone.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Ahora puedo hacer todo sola*

Future Plans: To work with MCC, I love how they are thinking and doing for everyone working in every field teaching, hosting, agriculture, connecting people peacefully. I love to learn Khmer. I know it's tough but I enjoy. I want to learn Spanish.

Planes Futuros: *Me gustaría trabajar con CCM, me encanta cómo están pensando y haciendo para que todos los que trabajan en todos los campos de la enseñanza, el alojamiento, la agricultura, etc., conectando a las personas de manera pacífica. Me encantó aprender khmer, sé que es difícil pero lo disfruto. Quiero aprender español.*

Ananda Murmu (India)

MCSFI Office Assistant, Chhattisgarh,
India Global Village Program Assistant, Mennonite
World Conference, Semarang, Indonesia



First Impression or Differences:

My first assignment country was India. It is in different state where I live. The culture was little different, food was little different. In Chhattisgarh, people usually talk in Hindi so I don't face language there. When I came to Indonesia it was difficult to converse with people. I saw girls wearing hijab everywhere, in India usually I don't see girls wearing hijab, that was totally new for me. The currency was different from India. Indonesian people use small bikes like scooters, in India we use big bikes. The people of Indonesia are very polite and very welcoming.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Mi primer país de destino fue la India. Es un estado diferente a donde estoy ahora. La cultura era un poco diferente, la comida era un poco diferente. En Chhattisgarh, la gente suele hablar en hindi, así que no me enfrento al lenguaje allí. Cuando*

vine a Indonesia era difícil conversar con la gente. Vi chicas usando hiyab en todas partes, en la India por lo general no veo chicas usando hiyab, eso era totalmente nuevo para mí. La moneda era diferente de la India. Los indonesios usan bicicletas pequeñas como scooter en India usamos bicicletas grandes. La gente de Indonesia es muy educada y muy acogedora.

Memorable or Funny Experience: When I was in Chhattisgarh that time we are distributing MWC relief assistance. That time people are suffering a lot because of COVID-19. Some people lost their job, lost their family members and lost their earnings. When we give them the relief assistance they are very happy and they are smiling. I can't forget the smiley faces. After a long wait when I finally reach Indonesia that moment I did not forget. I did not forget that moment when the airplane started flying in the air, I was afraid because that was my life's first flight. Everything goes right and also I like the journey in the airplane.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Cuando estuve en Chhattisgarh en ese momento estábamos distribuyendo asistencia y socorro con el CMM. En este tiempo la gente sufre mucho a causa del covid19. Algunas personas perdieron el trabajo, perdieron miembros de su familia, perdieron los ingresos. Cuando les damos la Asistencia de Socorro están muy contentos y sonríen. No puedo olvidar las caras sonrientes. Después de una larga espera cuando por fin llegué a Indonesia ese momento no lo olvido. No me olvidé de ese momento en que el avión empezó a volar por los aires, tuve miedo porque ese fue el primer vuelo de mi vida. Todo está bien y también el viaje en Avión estuvo bien.*

Faith Journey: In my faith journey I learned a lot while serving in Chhattisgarh. I learned from my host mother and father to pray in every situation, always praise God and give thanks to God for everything. In my host family everyday two times we are in devotion. From that time I am more dependent on God. God has strengthened my faith. I also realize how God blessed me in different ways.

Viaje de fe: *En mi caminar de fe aprendí mucho mantras servía en Chhattisgarh. Aprendí de mi anfitrión Mather & el padre Ore en cada situación, siempre alabo a Dios y doy gracias a Dios por todo. En mi familia anfitriona todos los días dos veces hacíamos Devocionales. A partir de ese momento soy más dependiente de Dios. Dios ha fortalecido mi fe. También me doy cuenta de cómo Dios me bendice de diferentes maneras.*

Career/Professional Development: I am planning to complete my higher studies. Also plans for a business setup for earning money.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Estoy planeando completar mis estudios superiores. También tengo planes para la configurar un negocio para ganar dinero.*

New Perspectives: My perspectives changed a lot, now I have more patience, I don't get angry all of a sudden now. In my working place I am working with different country people so I learned how to behave with others. My office staff helped me to understand how valuable and important I am. Now I listen to people very attentively. I have also grown emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Estoy planeando completar mis estudios superiores. También planeo configurar un negocio para ganar dinero. Mis Perspectivas han cambiado mucho ahora tengo más paciencia, ya no me enfado de repente. En mi lugar de trabajo, trabajo con gente de diferentes países, así que aprendo cómo comportarme con los demás. En mi oficina, el personal me ayudó a comprender lo valioso e importante que soy. ahora escucho a la gente con mucha atención. También crecí emocionalmente, mental y espiritualmente.*

Future Plans: After I'm back from here I want to go to visit my host family in Chhattisgarh, also I visit my MCSFI director. In my community I will share about my experience. I will encourage my youth members of my church to go with this program.

Planes Futuros: *Después de regresar de aquí, quiero ir a visitar a mi familia anfitriona en Chhattisgarh, también visitar a mi director de MCSFI. En mi comunidad quiero compartir mi experiencia. Animar a los miembros jóvenes de mi iglesia a seguir este programa.*

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Loyce Twongirwe (Uganda)

Communications and Marketing Specialist,
Mennonite World Conference.
Semarang, Indonesia



First Impression or Differences: To be honest, I did not pick up a good first impression at immigration, however when I entered the country to the hotel, during my quarantine, to the airport to Semarang, all that changed. People are welcoming and hospitable and kind. Same as like in my country, the hospitality and kindness.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Primera impresión o diferencias: para ser honesto, no tuve una buena primera impresión en inmigración, sin embargo, cuando entré al país, al hotel, durante mi cuarentena, al aeropuerto de Semarang, todo eso cambió. La gente es acogedora, hospitalaria y amable. Igual que en mi país, la hospitalidad y amabilidad.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: Immigration while entering Indonesia. It was the first time of its kind. I was asked to sit for almost four hours with no attention given and even amid that, someone would come pretend to be passing by and take a photo of me and then go back. It took me eight hours only to get through immigration and the only time I was given attention was like 20 minutes all together.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Inmigración: al entrar en Indonesia. Era mi primera experiencia de este tipo. Me pidieron que me sentara durante casi cuatro horas sin prestarme atención e incluso alguien venía a fingir que pasaba y me tomaba una foto diciendo que luego regresaría. Solo me tomó ocho horas llegar a inmigración y la única vez que me prestaron atención fue como 20 minutos en total.*

Faith Journey: My faith in God is growing much stronger especially with this journey. It's all been God all along. From the time when I was selected back in 2020 and the pandemic came, and then 2021 still until this time. The visa process and the arrival, it's all been God and it's been a test of faith and patience.

Viaje de fe: *Mi fe en Dios está creciendo mucho más fuerte especialmente con este viaje. En todo ha estado Dios en todo este tiempo. Desde el momento en que fui seleccionado para ir desde 2020 y vino la pandemia, y luego 2021 todavía hasta este momento. El proceso de VISA y la llegada, todo ha sido de Dios y ha sido una prueba de fe y paciencia.*

Career/Professional Development: I have really advanced in my editing skills and am still waiting for the assembly event so I can also explore photography skills and videography.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *He avanzado mucho en mis habilidades de edición y todavía estoy esperando el evento de montaje para poder explorar también mis habilidades de fotografía y creación de video.*

New Perspectives: We differ in different ways, cultural, spiritual and perspectives of view. We have diverse cultural backgrounds and we each have to respect everyone's culture but also their spiritual values.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *Diferimos en varias formas, culturales, espirituales y puntos de vista. Tenemos antecedentes culturales diversos y cada uno de nosotros debe respetar la cultura de todos, pero también sus valores espirituales.*

Future Plans: Sharing my experience will be my first interest because it's been an amazing journey of faith, believing and being patient with the Lord. People have a chance to lift their hope to the Lord when they hear good testimonies of what the Lord had done in other people's lives.

Planes Futuros: *Compartir mi experiencia será mi primer interés porque ha sido un viaje increíble de fe, creyendo y siendo paciente con el señor. Las personas tienen la oportunidad de elevar su esperanza al Señor cuando escuchan buenos testimonios de lo que el Señor ha hecho en la vida de otras personas.*

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Jinah Yu (Republic of Korea)
Teacher, Operation Hope Foundation
Prey Veng, Cambodia



First Impression or Differences: Korea is a country with four distinct seasons. So I didn't really know what it is like to sweat all year round. I also experienced an environment without air conditioners for the first time in my life. I learned how Cambodians live to protect themselves from the heat. The important thing is not to overdo it, but to live slowly. Which feels strange to me who is an "in a hurry" Korean.

Primera impresión o diferencias: *Corea es un país con cuatro estaciones distintas. Así que realmente no sabía lo que es sudar todo el año. También experimenté un ambiente sin aire acondicionado por primera vez en mi vida. Aprendí cómo viven los camboyanos para protegerse del calor. Lo importante no es exagerar, sino vivir despacio y despacito. Lo cual se siente extraño para mí que estoy "apurada" como coreana.*

Memorable or Funny Experience: Every single art lesson was funny and enjoyable. It was a real pleasure to see the little artist's masterpiece.

Experiencia Memorable o Divertida: *Cada lección de arte fue divertida y agradable. Fue un verdadero placer ver la obra maestra de los/as pequeños/as artistas.*

Faith Journey: Our little children say they love Jesus. I asked why, they said because Jesus gave them a house, food, clothes and educational opportunity. I realized that I had never thanked Jesus for those reasons. Because those things were natural to me. Now I know there is no such thing as a matter of course.

Viaje de fe: *Nuestros pequeñitos dicen que aman a Jesús. Cuando pregunté: ¿por qué?, dijeron: Porque Jesús nos ha dado casa, comida, ropa y oportunidades educativas. Me di cuenta de que nunca le había dado las gracias a Jesús por esas razones. Porque esas cosas me eran naturales. Ahora sé que no todos tenemos garantizado todo esto.*

Career/Professional Development: I feel like now I have to decide about my career path between international development and visual art. While helping children discover their talents, I also wanted to develop mine further.

Desarrollo profesional/carrera: *Siento que ahora tengo que decidir sobre mi carrera profesional entre el desarrollo internacional y las artes visuales. Mientras ayudaba a los niños a descubrir sus talentos, también quería desarrollar los míos aún más.*

New Perspectives: Helping poor people means I have to be poor too. I asked myself if I'm ready for that.

Nuevas Perspectivas: *“Ayudar a los pobres significa que yo también tengo que ser pobre”. Me pregunto a mí mismo si estoy lista para eso.*

Future Plans: For my church, during my term, I invited them to sponsor our children in the orphanage, so finally we have got two regular sponsors from Korea for the first time. Our church community is also very happy that we could extend a helping hand to Cambodia through me. I also hope one day in the future our children could visit and come to Korea for study.

Planes Futuros: *Con mi iglesia, durante mi tiempo de servicio, los invité a patrocinar a nuestros niños en el orfanato, por lo que finalmente tenemos 2 patrocinadores regulares de Corea por primera vez. La comunidad de nuestra iglesia también está muy contenta de que podamos extender una mano amiga a Camboya a través de mí. También espero que algún día en el futuro nuestros niños puedan visitar y venir a Corea para estudiar.*

Amazing (Asombroso)

This year has been a good one. New people, cultures, foods, skills and experiences.
Este año ha sido bueno. Nuevas personas, culturas, comidas, habilidades y experiencias.

(Loyce Twongirwe, YAMEN, Uganda to Indonesia)

Blessed (Bendecida)

I can develop myself in a foreign country. I was thinking the culture will be a trouble for me,
and it was but, I can make it happen today. I'm strong 😊

*Puedo desarrollarme en un país extranjero. Pensaba que la cultura sería un problema para mí,
pero no fue así. Puedo lograrlo. Soy fuerte.*

(Jenny Keang, YAMEN, Cambodia to India)

Blessings (Bendiciones)

Through this program whatever I get, everything helps me to grow in myself in various ways.

A través de este programa todo lo que obtengo me ayuda a crecer de varias maneras.

(Ananda Murmu, YAMEN, India to Indonesia)

Challenge (Desafío)

Facing changes always implies new challenges, when facing them we discover the capabilities
we must adapt and learn from any situation.

*Enfrentarse a cambios siempre implica nuevos desafíos y retos, al enfrentarlos descubrimos
las capacidades que tenemos para adaptarnos y aprender de cualquier situación.*

(Beatriz Guazá Sandoval, YAMEN, Colombia to Honduras)

Cheerfulness (Alegría)

This year has shown me that my greatest wealth is not in the resources I own
but in the cheerfulness of my heart to share the love stored in it.

*Este año me ha demostrado que mi mayor riqueza no está en los recursos que poseo sino
en la alegría de mi corazón para compartir el amor que en él se guardo.*

(Mudimka Kassam, YAMEN, Nigeria to Colombia)

Constructive (Constructivo)

I am learning many things.

Estoy aprendiendo muchas cosas.

(Josue Damião, YAMEN, Mozambique to India)

“Dongmu” (“Dongmu”)

It means a special friendship in Korean. An unexpected friendship was God’s gift for me, and I could be more strong.

Significa una amistad especial en coreano. Una amistad inesperada fue un regalo de Dios para mí y pude ser más fuerte.

(Juyeong Lee, YAMEN, Republic of Korea to Jordan)

Experience (Experiencia)

I would like to experience Mennonite World Conference Assembly events and the lifestyle of Indonesia because this event is more precious for me.

Me gustaría experimentar los eventos de la Asamblea del CMM y el estilo de vida de Indonesia. Porque estos eventos son muy preciados para mí.

(Sunil Kadmaset, YAMEN, India to Indonesia)

Exploration (Exploración)

I was able to explore new cultural and linguistic learnings. I ventured out of my comfort zone to explore new experiences while serving people. Even though in tough times I was able to stay focused and learned self-patience. It enhanced my serving urge.

Pude explorar nuevos aprendizajes culturales y lingüísticos. Me aventuré a salir de mi zona de confort para explorar nuevas experiencias mientras servía a las personas. Aunque en tiempos difíciles pude mantenerme enfocada y aprendí a tener paciencia. Mejoró más mi impulso de servir.

(Anupama Mandi, YAMEN, India to Kenya)

Faithful (Fiel)

Being faithful in small things is often boring. Almost meaningless, unless our motivation is right, and we do it all wholeheartedly. Whatever we do, even though it’s small nothing is wasted.

God will make it meaningful and amazing.

Ser fiel en las cosas pequeñas a menudo es aburrido. Casi sin sentido, pero si nuestra motivación es correcta, y lo hacemos todo de todo corazón. Hagamos lo que hagamos, aunque sea pequeño, nada se desperdicia. Dios lo hará significativo y asombroso.

(Tiara Asrilita, YAMEN, Indonesia to Kenya)

Friendly (Amigable)

I think I would be friendly and sociable because I can express myself easily and create a bond of trust in all areas, which has helped me a lot when it comes to teaching, meeting people and even correcting.

Creo que sería amigable y sociable porque puedo expresarme fácilmente y crear un lazo de confianza en todos los ámbitos. lo cual me ha ayudado mucho a la hora de enseñar, conocer personas e incluso corregir.

(Abigail Arévalo Tabora, YAMEN, Bolivia to Honduras)

Fullness (*Plenitud*)

Everything I have and who I am is by grace, I don't need to hold on, but I need to continue being Elda, this person that continues to form, that learns and that changes.

Todo lo que tengo y soy es por gracia, no necesito aferrarme, pero necesito seguir siendo Elda, esta que se sigue formando, que aprende y que cambia.

(Elda Antonio García, YAMEN, Mexico to Honduras)

Growth (*Año de crecimiento*)

I am sure that all the things I have experienced will be very useful for me in the future, especially in my professional field.

Estoy seguro de que todo lo vivido me será de gran utilidad en el futuro, sobre todo en mi ámbito profesional.

(Natacha Kyendrebeogo, YAMEN, Burkina Faso to Indonesia)

Warm (*Cálido*)

Warm weather and warm love. In the middle of summer I met Cambodian children in the orphanage and loved them warmly.

Clima cálido y amor cálido. A mediados del verano, conocí a niños camboyanos en el orfanato y los amé tiernamente.

(Jinah Yu, YAMEN, Republic of Korea to Cambodia)

Interesting (*Interesante*)

Cambodia is an amazing country and everywhere I visit surprises me with new things that I get to learn every time.

Camboya es un país increíble y cada lugar que visito me sorprende con cosas nuevas que aprendo cada vez.

(Neema Atieno, YAMEN, Kenya to Cambodia)

Learning (*Aprendizaje*)

Being in a new context with new people allows me to learn from experiences and ways of thinking that are different from my own.

El estar en un contexto nuevo con personas nuevas, eso hace que puedas aprender de las experiencias y formas de pensar distintas a las tuyas.

(Mario Hernández, YAMEN, Honduras to Bolivia)

Life-changing (*Un momento que me cambió la vida*)

I now know that being a Christian in a country that a lot of people are Christians, including your family, is something I have to be grateful for. And I have also seen farming changing people's lives, this journey gave me something I never had.

Ahora sé que ser cristiano en un país donde mucha gente es cristiana, incluida tu familia, es algo por lo que tengo que estar agradecido. Y también he visto cómo la agricultura cambia la vida de las personas, este viaje me dio algo que nunca antes había tenido.

(Jacksha Jackson, YAMEN, Malawi to Cambodia)

Luke 1:45 (NIV) (*Lucas 1:45*)

“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promise to her”

“Bienaventurada la que ha creído que el Señor cumplirá la promesa que le hizo”

(Disha Masih, YAMEN, India to Cambodia)

Privilege (*Privilegio*)

India has so many stereotypes, especially for a girl, and coming to India was beyond my expectation. So, yes, it is a privilege for me as a girl who had a journey of living in India along with gaining experiences and learning so many new things, also new perspectives.

India tiene tantos estereotipos, especialmente para una niña, y venir a India superó mis expectativas. Entonces, sí, es un privilegio para mí como una niña que tiene un viaje de vivir en la India junto con adquirir experiencias y aprender muchas cosas nuevas, también una nueva perspectiva.

(Finna Kristanto, YAMEN, Indonesia to India)

Revealing (*Revelador*)

This year has revealed my full potential, it has been a journey of liberation from my own limitations and the limitations from others.

Este año ha revelado todo mi potencial, ha sido un viaje de liberación de mis propias limitaciones y las limitaciones de los demás.

(Charity Dralega, YAMEN, Uganda to Jordan)



Daniel Otoide (Nigeria), Stefanny Sierra (Colombia) and Hyojae Kwak (Republic of Korea) enjoy Ocean Beach in San Francisco, CA.



Luis Magoeia (Mozambique) shows off a sample cement vase he made at R-CITY.



Hyojae Kwak (Republic of Korea) decorating for Christmas with her hosts Chris, Everett and Jackson.



Christian Nawai (Chad) enjoys seeing the U.S. Capitol with hosts Mitch, Lora, Adam, Ira and Auggie Nafziger.



Omar Borja (Colombia) on his host's farm.



Omar Borja (Colombia) and host brother Jacob Stoltzfus.



Miguel "Angel" Neri Carbot (Mexico), Tri Sumarni (Indonesia), Monica Raharjo (Indonesia) and Ritika Khati (Nepal) enjoying Chicago.



Placido Messelela (Mozambique) presenting his work at the Lancaster Bible College Art Show.



Ritika Khati (Nepal) enjoying her hosts Leon Bauman and Char Yutzy.



Stefanny Sierra (Colombia) enjoying the ocean with host Lorene Doster and Ellie.



Ayibongwe "Thandeka" Ncube (Zimbabwe) enjoying Campus by the Sea at a church retreat.



Tri Sumarni (Indonesia) with her hosts Lora, Colin, Gavin and Avert Rusel.

IVEP



Alex Kachkovskiy (Ukraine) making “draniki” (potato pancakes).



Alex Kachkovskiy (Ukraine) with Fairmount Homes resident Ezra Stoltzfus.



Central States and West Coast IVEPs enjoying Korean food together.



Rufaro Manyureni (Zimbabwe) take a break from snow shoveling.



Daniel Otoide (Nigeria) with the Refugee Resettlement Team at Della Lamb.



Juliet Dias (Bangladesh) raking for a school service day in Freeman, SD.



Great Lakes IVEPers try ice skating.



Enjoying a Christmas bonfire with Great Lakes IVEPers and friends.



International Worship Festival in Goshen, IN.



Enjoying Warren Dunes Park during mid-year conference.



East Coast and Central States IVEPers and staff enjoy a break at Eastern Mennonite University.



Monica Raharjo (Indonesia) with her hosts Joy, Randy Detweiler and children.

SALT



Autumn Chandler on games day at Stansberry Ministries, planned by her and Mario Hernández (YAMEN).



Charlie Welch watches Volcano Fuego erupt during a hike.



Anna Herning enjoys a cookout on the roof with her host parents Akram Ishaq, left, and Eyman Ishaq, center.



Ben Stutzman at his host home in Kasese, Uganda, with host nephews/nieces: Mark Allan Asaba, Nikethu Abel, Athuire Jennifer, and Kirabo Esther Kirungi.



Charlie Welch enjoys recreation with some of the students at Puerta de Esperanza.



Juyeong Lee (YAMEN), Charity Dralega (YAMEN), Marc Falconer (CPC), Annie Serez and Anna Herning during a trip to Petra, Jordan, and the Dead Sea.

SALT



Clara Unzicker with host parents Flor Marina Rozo, left, and Emilio Martinez, right.



John "Colin" Caisley with students at Ezra Gumbe Primary School after a peace club meeting. Left to right: Vallery Sandra, Colin Caisley, Ramadhan Hassan and Saidi Yusuf.



Clara Unzicker with her boss, Martha Garcia, works on plans for the 2022 year at Creciendo Juntos.



Erika Enomoto, Wendy Vado (CPC), Elda Antonio Garcia (YAMEN) and Beatriz Guaza Sandoval (YAMEN) at the MCC Nicaragua and Honduras team retreat in Mirador de Matagalpa, Nicaragua.



Joefin Peter and Sarah Janzen take a field trip to a monastery with their host community, a faith-based school.



The MCC Kenya/Tanzania SALTers, Kathryn Swartz, Kate Nieuwsma and Colin Caisley, visit each other in Kisumu, Kenya.

SALT



Olivia Knull, right, on a field visit with Pastor Herlimana Eustache, a board member of MCC partner, Peace and Development Network (PDN).



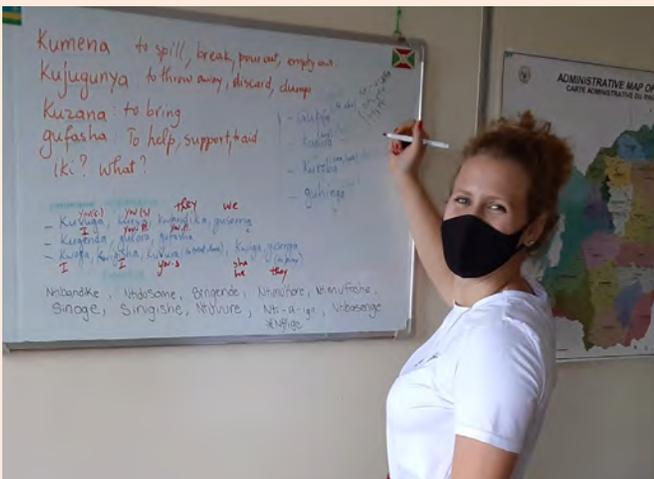
Kathryn Swartz, right, with friend Innocent Ooko.



Lynette Madrigal-Granados, bottom left corner, enjoys a day at the park with a group of participants and staff from Casa del Migrante.



Lynette Madrigal-Granados with staff from Casa del Migrante. From left: Whitney Gamuach, Lynette Madrigal-Granados, Monica Monterroso, and Ivanovah Espinoza.



Olivia Knull studies Kinyarwanda during language training.



CPN Field officers goof around in Mathare, Kenya: Winnie Ajwang, Jason Were, Christabell Awuor, and Kate Nieuwsma.

SALT



Ranita DiMarco poses with a mother and baby rhino while hiking at Matobo National Park in Zimbabwe.



Ranita DiMarco, center, with Immaculate Phiri, Tadiwa Anashe, and Liandra Dube, helps the children with swimming.



Rebecca McKague loads a truck with tree saplings grown by MCC partner IESII for reforestation projects in Chiapas, Mexico.



Rebecca McKague experiences Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) for the first time in Mexico. The women in the picture are wearing the colourful celebration dress of the State of Chiapas.



Ben Stutzman, left, with his Lukonjo teacher, Nzalumba Jockim, about to start one of his daily Lukonjo lessons outside St. Paul's Cathedral in Kasese, Uganda.



Joefin Peter and Sarah Janzen explore a mountain area outside of Beirut.

YAMEN



MWC staff and YAMENers, including Ananda Murmu, Sunil Kadmaset, Natacha Kyendrebeogo and Loyce Twongirwe in Semarang, Indonesia.



Ananda Murmu, far right, going out on the weekend with friends and fellow YAMENers Sunil Kadmaset, Natacha Kyendrebeogo and Loyce Twongirwe.



Finna Kristanto with Class 10 of Aron Jantzen Memorial High School on Children's Farewell Day.



Finna Kristanto with her host family ready to attend a wedding. From left: Anglina Milan, Akansha Milap, Harendra Milap and Finna Kristanto.



Finna Kristanto joins the youth community in Mennonite Church Rajnandgaon to sing on Christmas Day.



Jenny Keang, far left, attends a staff training for Restorative Justice Project with MCC and BAWCSW staff.

YAMEN



Natacha Kyendrebeogo at work preparing for Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Indonesia.



Jenny Keang works on a chart for an HIV Project workshop with BAWCSW.



Juyeong Lee, second from right, on the last day of the olive harvest with MCC partner Caritas.



Natacha Kyendrebeogo standing with the Mennonite World Conference Assembly sign!



Neema Atieno, second from left, celebrating at the staff awards ceremony with Voice of Love Cambodia.



Tiara Asrilita, middle, with her teacher friends Sara Muloni, left, and Lucy Ndungu, at school.

YAMEN



Mudimka Kassam, left, with host father Rodrigo Preciado, celebrating with children at San Joaquin by serving them with lechona food and gifts.



Tiara Asrilita, right, with her student, Fellista Nyambura, and the student's aunty, Anastasia Mwuangi.



Jinah Yu teaching children how to make kimchi, a traditional Korean dish made of fermented cabbage.



Josue Damião, center, with youth group from the Mennonite Church in Raipur, India.



Josue Damião, right, with YAMEN alumnus Enosh Rupamajhi (2019–2020).



Mudimka Kassam, far right, eating out with host parents Rodrigo Preciado, left, and Emilse Bobadilla.

YAMEN



Anupama Mandi, third from left, attending a Maasai marriage function with colleagues.



Anupama Mandi, center, being welcomed to the church by LCC Chairman James Naimodu, left, and Mary Ntutu.



Juyeong Lee, Annie Serez (SALT), Anna Herning (SALT), Charity Dralega, and Marc Falconer (CPC) learning about the process of enlisting beneficiaries for the distribution of MCC humanitarian aid.



Disha Masih, Jinah Yu and Jacksha Jackson with Clivia Avila (CPC), pose by the Independence Monument in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, during an orientation tour of the city.



Abigail Arévalo Tabora, Autumn Chandler (SALT) and Mario Hernández join MCC staff and a friend for an adventure to Espejillos, a beautiful creek with water wells aptly named "little mirrors".



Erika Enomoto (SALT), Wendy Vado (CPC), Elda Antonio García and Beatriz Guazá Sandoval at the MCC Nicaragua and Honduras team retreat in Mirador de Matagalpa, Nicaragua.

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