

# ALEJANDRA shares her story

Like so many millions of workers in Los Angeles, Alejandra lost her job at the start of the pandemic. Without income or savings, she approached several local churches for food. It was not always enough for her small family & sometimes she went without so that her daughters could have something to eat. "I hated knowing that I was failing them," she shared.

Finally, Alejandra was referred to MEND. She started to pick up food at MEND in August 2020, and the relief for finding a predictable source of food was obvious. A shy woman, she mostly kept to herself. But after almost a year, she began to open up about her life. Though deeply grateful for the help, she hates relying on donated food, she shared. We understand.

So, when she found a seasonal job, then another last year, both in retail, we celebrated her success. But in May 2021, she stopped working when she fell sick with COVID-19 and needed over 2 months to recover. She is still afraid and anxious for her family, but for her, prayers have helped keep her positive and grateful.

Although there is uncertainty about what to expect in 2022, she is hopeful that things will get better soon.



## GIVING HOPE

### BECAUSE OF YOU

It is hard to reflect on 2021 without thinking about how drastically things changed for us all, *in just two years*. The cascading damage of economic & social stresses from the pandemic continued to drive a massive surge in demand for services at MEND. Your generous help enabled MEND to serve over *half a million people in 12 months*. Thank you for your heart for others. For the 3.1 million nourishing meals you made possible. The hope and help you offered to people you may never meet. The care & kindness you extended for people who are struggling. We are grateful today and always, for being our MEND family and for the hope that you bring.



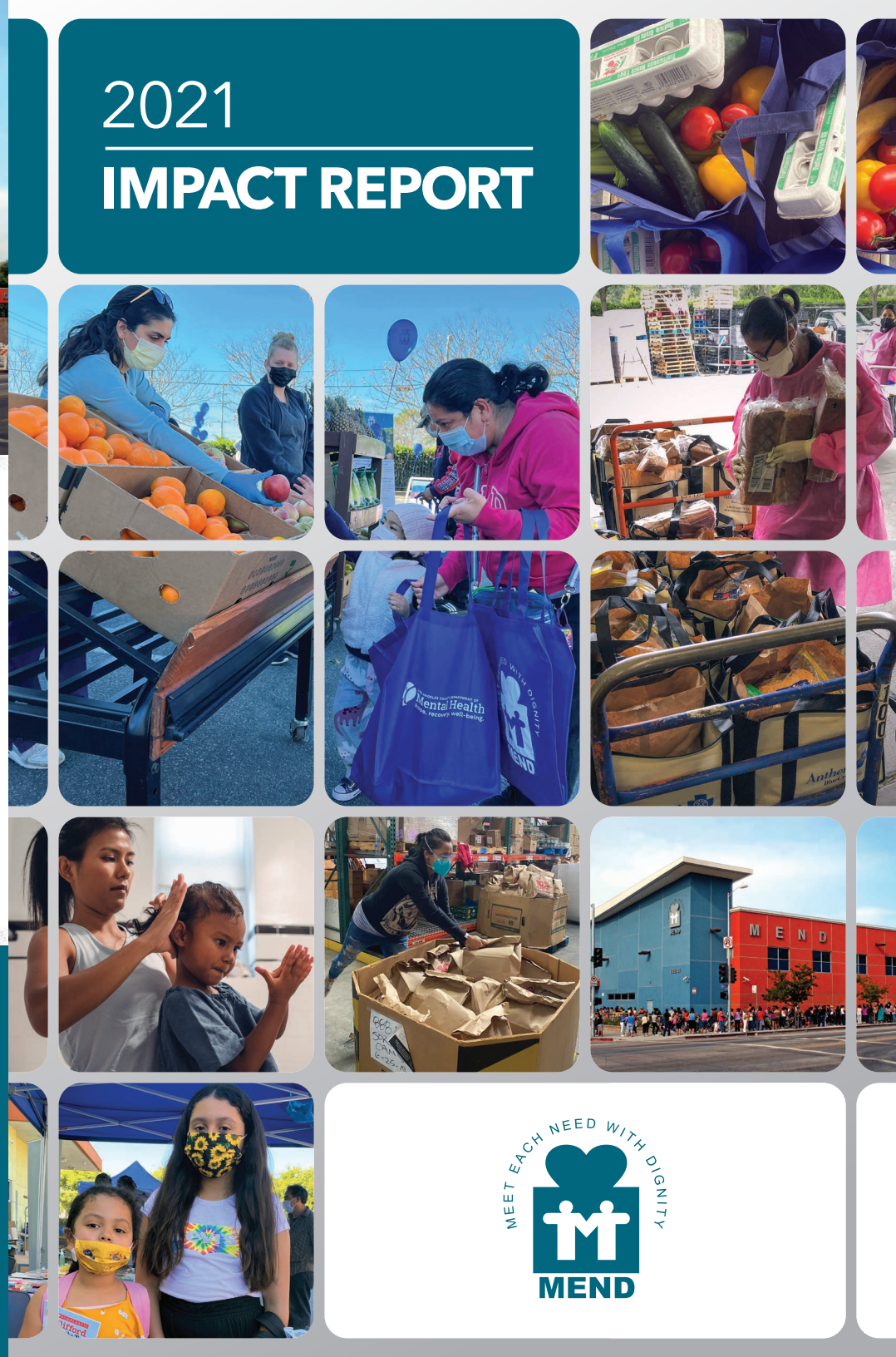
10641 San Fernando Road | Pacoima, CA 91331  
www.MendPoverty.Org | (818) 897-2443

**Please call us or visit our website for ways to give.**

Names and photos may have been changed to protect privacy.



## 2021 IMPACT REPORT





## Giving Hope; MARIA's Journey

Listening to Maria as she recounted the tragic set of circumstances that led her to MEND's doors was heartbreaking. A single mother, Maria was seeking help with thousands of dollars in unpaid rental payments. Here's her back story: following a vehicle accident in 2020, Maria received \$10,000 in compensation. But, a few months later she had to take all of the money out to pay ransom for her mother and sister who had been kidnapped in Mexico. This was the only savings she had. But, seeking her family's release in Mexico was urgent. She paid the ransom. Sadly, in the end, it was too late.

Maria's mother and sister had already lost their lives.

Without a moment's hesitation, Maria took in her two small nephews, as they'd been left without a parent. With added expenses on top of everything, her life became incredibly difficult. We worked quickly to respond to her immediate needs. We enrolled her in our food services and qualified her for rental assistance. Our goal right now is to help alleviate some of the considerable burden caused by this terrible tragedy to her family. In the next months, we hope to introduce Maria to **Here We Thrive** so that she can work on a sustainable solution to the challenges she is currently facing.



## YOUR IMPACT IN 2021

**297,550** PEOPLE ATE 3.1 MILLION NOURISHING MEALS

**3,705,836** MILLION POUNDS OF HEALTHY FOOD DISTRIBUTED

**5,260** POUNDS OF HOME-DELIVERED FOOD TO GRATEFUL HIGH-RISK SENIORS

**260,547** REACHED BY COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS WITH HELP & RESOURCES

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**42,338** diapers received by **267** low-income families with infants & toddlers

Clothing, holiday care packets & essentials to hundreds of vulnerable participants

**843** board games for families to put under the tree

**4,607** vaccinations facilitated

**59,379** PPE kits and house cleaning products dropped off at households

## LIFE TRANSFORMING PROGRAMS

*For every life lifted in 2021 and always - thank you again for being our MEND family.*

- MEND's massive **Community Nourishment Programs** feed hundreds of thousands of people in need of food through a Food Pantry (direct distribution), Food Bank (distribution to partners), Buen Provecho farmers market & Health "Store". The drive-through and walk-up lines remain long, but your help enables us to put canned & dry goods, meat, eggs, dairy and fresh fruits & vegetables in the hands of hungry people in LA.
- Consolidated under one umbrella called **Here We Thrive (HWT)**, our **case management services** offer intensive one-to-one interventions to help participants address the root causes of their struggles. In addition to family support & wellness, HWT provides onsite job development help, as well as housing, mental health & other resources through partners.
- MEND's community ambassador outreach services continued in 2021 through the **Hope & Care** program and other services, providing help with COVID testing/vaccines, wellness support, and mental health resources.
- **First Step** services have reopened every Thursday in 2022 with direct and indirect services for those who are homeless.
- MEND remains a **resource** for people in Los Angeles who live in crisis and in need of clothing, diapers, hygiene items, and help with essentials on a case-to-case basis.
- And, finally, year after year MEND sets aside time to restock backpacks for low-income children and celebrate the holidays with community members who are homeless and marginalized.