Major funding for The Colombia Project – TCP Global has come from Friends of Colombia which makes an annual donation. Articles in the Friends of Colombia newsletter and on their website prompted donations from Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who had served in Colombia. Approximately fifty participants at a 2008 conference of Colombia RPCVs were able to visit micro-loan sites in Cartagena and Santa Marta and many have continued to contribute.

One who is particularly passionate in her support of the micro-loan program is Betty Scalise, who had served as a volunteer in a rural area along the northern coast of Colombia. She donated $1,000 towards a rural micro-loan program on the coast. At the time we were communicating with three Peace Corps Response Volunteers who expressed an interest in starting a loan program in their rural sites, but Peace Corps staff had serious reservations and was not ready to support their efforts. Urged on by Betty's donation and her promise of additional donations to expand a rural program, we persisted even when it looked hopeless. Hers was a fortuitous designated donation.

It is easiest, of course to work with unrestricted funds that can go to any micro-loan program, but when people ask for funds to go to a specific country or site, we honor the donor’s wishes. The Colombia Project and TCP Global have never denied a partner’s funding request due to lack of money but could face that dilemma if too many donations are designated to sites that no longer need funds. 2019, TCP Global will continue to recruit new partners through currently serving
Fundraising brunch

Fundraising events are a good way to supplement RPCV donations. The Colombia Project brunch was both a major funding source from 2004-2009 as well as a means to educate supporters about the program. In that period, we sent less than $10,000 per year to Colombia for the loan program and hence brunch proceeds of $5,000 were major. We typically charged double what the restaurant charged with the additional proceeds going to the loan program. By 2009, when the restaurant where we hosted the brunch raised its rate, this fundraiser began to consume a disproportionate amount of time and energy while the proceeds decreased.

In 2010, we changed to a virtual fundraiser since many of our brunch donations had come from people out of town who did not attend the event anyway. We sent an email appeal to all previous donors with photos and updates and a request for donations. While donations fell it was not a significant decline. The difference was made up with a November update to donors that usually does not directly ask for donations, but thanks donors for past support and brings them up to date on recent accomplishments. Since many people are doing year-end donations in November, the results are generally good.
The more significant negative result of ending the brunch, however, was the lost opportunity to update our donor community on the impact of Colombia Project loans. Participants in the brunch event developed strong connections and an emotional investment in the success of the program. We offered a slide show about The Colombia Project at large events and presentations at a free happy hour, but we have not been able to get participants to focus on The Colombia Project – TCP Global as they did during the brunch.