



Outreach Aid to the Americas

Alcance de Ayuda a las Americas

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE



OAA empowers vulnerable communities through development assistance such as youth development, women's empowerment projects, self-employment initiatives, and other innovative interventions. These projects improve the lives of vulnerable and persecuted persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

OAA believes that citizens in the LAC region simply need tools and knowledge to grow resiliency, promote unity and solidarity between neighbors and communities, and open space for dialogue to help rebuild a wounded society. OAA is committed to provide support.



OAA serves vulnerable people in the Americas through sustainable community development. We know that building strong local organizations and communities requires engaging people of diverse backgrounds and ages and empowering them to face a variety of challenges. This is why we develop programs that include capacity-building classes, training and awareness-raising of key issues that affect communities. These include violence, child and youth exploitation, human rights, gender inequalities, employment and productivity, and many others.

We share the hope of Christ as we provide biblically based training, capacity, and programs that restore dignity and break the cycle of poverty.

We also provide disadvantaged youth with tools for productive employment and we provide tools to increase productivity. Our initiatives focus on areas including employment generation, leadership training, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities, crime and violence prevention, and civic participation.



Our purpose is to provide aid; alleviate the suffering; improve the dignity and quality of life of individuals, families, and communities, and to ferment positive change toward democracy and freedoms. OAA promotes citizen participation in developing community programs.

Our key distinctive: Our strength is the trust with local partners that we have earned over more than 27 years of experience. We have proven methodologies and tools to provide capacity building and assistance to vulnerable people and communities through faith-based local partners. Our targeted interventions improve the lives of the poorest and most disadvantaged people — those who permanently or during a crisis do not have the resources to lead active, healthy and secure lives.



Employment generation is one of OAA's main priorities to enable self-reliance. Using a variety of approaches, our programs help support self-employment and small businesses, provide skills training to youth and vulnerable people. To assure maximum benefits, we work with local churches and residents who are disadvantaged because of economic disparity, civil conflict, racial, religious, or ethnic prejudices, and lack of access to basic opportunities. We ensure that our programs create the essential conditions for sustainable economic growth.

The Village Transformation Program-Self-employment supports the development of micro-businesses in rural communities. The program empowers individuals to provide for their families and learn valuable savings habits over the short and long term. The program assists poor families by donating chicken coops to various families in rural communities. Over the course of the hens' production cycle, the families are benefited from the production of the eggs in two ways: they consume some the eggs, and sell the rest in local markets. The income is then saved to maintain the chicken coop; used to launch another type of small business; or used to meet other family needs. In this way, the families increase their self-sufficiency and increase their nutrition standards through the chicken coop microbusiness.

KEY GOALS

- Reduce hopelessness and marginalization.
- Equip local partners for sustainability and holistic impact.
- Reduce community insecurity and improve economic opportunity.
- Provide effective job skill training.



Above: OAA staff member speaking with beneficiaries of the Village Transformation Program. Right: Man showing eggs produced by chickens through the Village Transformation Program.



The Business in a Box (BIB) program is an innovative, practical, and proven solution that meets the need for creating new income-generating opportunities targeting women in rural areas who are victims of domestic or gang violence or who are single mothers struggling to make ends meet from rural areas. The objective of BIB is to generate and grow sustainable self-employment initiatives (SEIs) that can provide participants the opportunity to diversify their income-generating activities, generating the steady income necessary to stabilize a household.

The BIB program consists of three main components: 1) Training in skills for life, business planning and management; 2) the provision of standardized business kits that include all of the tools, materials, and equipment necessary to start a small-size business in a variety of industries such as manicurists, hairstylists, seamstresses, graphic designers, event planners, and bakers; and 3) ongoing mentoring that enables nascent entrepreneurs to access the knowledge to help them in as they begin facing business challenges.

BUSINESS IN A BOX *Program Methodology*

- Partner selection and orientation.
- Equip church partners and facilitators, and provide technical expertise.
- Recruit volunteers and entrepreneurs
- Form and train candidates.
- Launch the business.
- Manage the business.
- Provide ongoing support, coaching, monitoring, and mentoring.
- Long-term engagement.
- Stage II: Marketing the products.



Many young people in the Americas are confronted with situations where they are out of school, out of work, and deprived of a chance to gain the independence and the opportunity they seek for self-advancement. As a strong advocate for youth, OAA works with local communities to ensure that they become stronger and more dynamic by providing youth with opportunities, development, and the right tools for them to succeed. This is why our initiatives focus on several areas, including: employment.

Through an intensive and tailored training curriculum, OAA works to improve the knowledge, hard and soft skills of emerging leaders. Youth leadership fundamentals, social entrepreneurship, project management skills, multimedia production, social media and digital security are some of the key areas of training. This experience helps them identify their personal strengths and weaknesses, which also helps them define their leadership skills and how to improve them.

KEY GOALS

- Provide disadvantaged and at-risk youth with tools for productive employment, and provide tools to increase productivity.
- Improve technical training for youth.
- Increase youth impact by forming leaders through education and leadership training.



OAA has extensive experience strengthening civil society organizations throughout the Americas, building the capacity of local organizations, including faith-based organizations (FBOs) and municipalities by working alongside them to face many issues. This approach has developed much needed leadership and improved how organizations tackle community challenges. We also provide technical assistance and other resources that help communities tackle local problems with efficiency, effectiveness and transparency, supporting the growth of a grassroots democratic culture.

Vulnerable Populations

OAA ensures that the design and implementation of activities integrate, engage and empower youth and vulnerable populations. Most FBOs have ministries and programs that reach out to vulnerable groups including women, the elderly, young children, and school-aged youth. We work with FBO partners to reach these groups, specifically youth, to provide them with the right tools to help them succeed.

KEY GOALS

- Build strong communities by empowering them to face a wide range of development challenges and with programs that improve the quality of life.



OAA provides innovative resources, leadership training, and support to youth with extensive experience in Cuba, where OAA has distributed a large number of laptops and e-tablets to seven FBO leadership training facilities. The units are loaded with software that includes more material than what is available in an entire typical educational library. Thousands of students, teachers, pastors, and leaders have shared these electronic libraries.

Our and our local partners' experience in these programs shows that there is a latent problem regarding violence, hatred, conflict, and fear in society, that is fragmenting and dividing people in Latin America and the Caribbean.

OAA has a high level of experience in providing key resources, facilitating training, and building the capacity of local civil society leaders and groups in politically repressive environments, especially in Cuba and Nicaragua. Over the years, OAA has increased its work in these complex settings, serving those most in need, carrying out projects successfully, and caring for all involved. The strong relationship of OAA with its local partners has enabled successful training in virtual settings; other activities such as selection and vetting of participants are conducted by the local partners physically/on-the-ground.



We partner with local organizations, especially faith-based organizations (FBOs) such as churches and local ministries, to help vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families to alleviate their suffering and improve their dignity and quality of life. FBOs play a crucial role in community service delivery, civil society development, and even political reform that advances democracy. FBOs provide services that the government often cannot and are permanently embedded in communities; thus they can offer the best solutions for sustainability managing programs for vulnerable youth, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and others.

Building the capacity of FBOs

OAA provides technical assistance and training of FBOs to improve their performance and achievement of organizational objectives by building their capacity to work, collaborate effectively, and engage with vulnerable populations, while promoting human rights, democracy, transparency, and development in their communities. Our capacity building includes skills development in several areas including leadership, mentoring, communication, problem-solving, relationship-building, resources management, organizational development, accountability, and strategic planning. Our capacity building efforts have helped FBOs overcome daily work constraints and extend their advocacy efforts and outreach to their communities.

KEY GOALS

- Provide leadership and organizational capacity to local faith-based partners.
- Provide interfaith dialogue and networking opportunities for local faith-based partners and North American donors and service providers.
- Expand the number of implementing partners for violence prevention in Central America.
- Strengthen our relationship and build trust with our in-kind goods and services support partners.
- Create strategic agreements for key initiatives with private sector organizations to accomplish our mission.



EVANGELISM PROJECTS

The Solomon Project



One of OAA's leading initiatives has been The Solomon Project, which we have been implementing for more than 18 years, thanks mostly to the generous support of private Christian foundations who have shown remarkable commitment to the project's mission of equipping churches and key theological seminaries and biblical institutes all over the island with Christian educational materials and technological tools. We believe that through biblical study materials, practical resources for pastors, and training programs, Christian leaders in Cuba can effectively lead the growing church. The Church in Cuba needs pastors and leaders with sound theological training who can equip and shepherd their flock. In response to this need, OAA comes alongside national religious leaders and communities to strengthen others in the church.



OAA's innovative projects empowering young people, helping to build a better society, and building sustainable communities have received accolades from national organizations such as Ministry Watch and the National Christian Foundation. Two of those projects are summarized here:

Youth Grassroots Program: The objective is to enhance the capacity of local organizations and community leaders to participate as active members of civil society and create opportunities for citizen engagement in social impact projects in their communities.

- Through a training program, young people receive tools to design social projects aimed at fostering well-being in their communities.
- OAA designs an educational platform in which young people receive training to design and manage the projects. They also receive initial capital to execute their project.



We are One; Fun and Education with Photography



The project introduces children to the essentials of photography through games and engaging conversations. The focus of the workshop is to teach children not only skills but also good values. For example, they were taught that like light sources in photography, each of us has the power to bring positivity and reflect good things (“light”) on every situation.



Children at a photography workshop





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