

Our Love Letter to You

March, 2017

Annual Work Plan 2017

Greetings and Blessings to all of you!

We are happy to celebrate our 23rd anniversary of ministry. Our vision for 2017 is to support churches and ministries in Cuba, El Salvador, and elsewhere to reach the most unreached with the love of Christ. We believe that by providing materials, education, and support, we can help people from marginalized populations and build the body of Christ. We pray that 2017 will be a year of building on our foundation and expanding capacity through the launching of new ministry initiatives and projects, and creating new avenues for partnership through prayer and collaboration.

Our main purpose is to foster the dignity and quality of life of vulnerable people in the Americas. OAA seeks to respond to the needs of individuals, families, and communities. OAA's main programmatic focus encompasses three key areas (1) *Relief*, by providing humanitarian and disasters aid, and preparedness (2) *Development*, by empowering vulnerable communicates; and (3) *Advocacy*, by promoting human rights, specifically freedom of religion, expression and assembly.



In 2017 we plan to continue providing resources and expertise to our local partners to help advance the fundamental freedoms, organizational skills, education, and social services that are the foundation of a healthy society. And we will also continue as an organization to be committed

to serving the most vulnerable people, including people with disabilities living in developing nations.

We will also continue to strengthen the church to proclaim freedom in Christ by taking the church outside its walls and continue to execute ministry work to the millions hurting by feeding them spiritually and physically, providing medicine, and allowing the church to become an agent of hope and change. Additionally, through our **Solomon Program** we are committed to empowering and equipping new and existing leaders with sound training on the fundamentals of Christian leadership.

The rebuilding process following the tremendous damages caused by Hurricane Matthew in Cuba and Haiti will require years of support. We will continue to work with Evangelical denominations to continue to assess the needs and to provide help possibly in the form of dehydrated nutritious meals and disaster relief products to the victims and to our brothers in Christ and pastors who are in need.

Our main country priorities are as follows:

CUBA. Since President Obama's December 2014 announcement that the U.S. is charting a new course with Cuba, some positive changes have been noted on the island. Incremental progress and increased flexibility gives us hope for the future. The normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba has opened possibilities for transformation and give us the opportunity to further our efforts of implementing programs to continue helping the suffering church of Cuba. We believe that we are well positioned to lead this effort.

The church of Cuba can play a vital role in this historical transition. Now more than ever we need to support the Cuban church in building a solid foundation for lasting positive change on the local, institutional and systematic level. The church in Cuba faces the challenge to emerge as one new, capable, independent, holy, and passionate church for Jesus Christ. People will need their faith, families, and church communities to sustain them as they learn to participate fully in building a healthier, more equitable society. We want to come along side God and help the Cuban church to spread the gospel through the effective use of state-of-the-art technology and educational materials.

We are proud to be one of the founding members of *The First Frontier Cuba Network*, a selected group of U.S. churches and ministries united to help the Church in Cuba by developing a strategic response to the changes taking place there. The Network has initiated work with eight different Cuban denominations and includes all of the largest conventions such as the Methodists, Assemblies of God and the various Baptists Conventions. We expect to spend much of our efforts in this area in 2017.

Through our *Explore International* initiative, we engage with missionary organizations by helping coordinate and facilitate mission trips to provide access and learning opportunities to witness firsthand the work and needs of the Christian church in Cuba. We will continue to focus attention in this area.

EL SALVADOR. We will continue to be committed to serving vulnerable and disadvantaged people in rural areas by providing more meals and vitamins for thousands of children, women and elderly.

Other Programs: We have a very successful partnership program with Feed My Starving Children (FMSC), Feeding the Nations (FTN), Matthew 25 Ministries (M25M) and Breedlove Foods. Last year, we delivered a total of 21 containers of food aid to three countries. We are also building relations with Matthew 25 Ministries and with Feeding the Nations ministry for Cuba, El Salvador and Haiti. We hope to be able to expand to Guatemala. We will continue to partner with local churches, organizations, and NGOs to distributed food in dry-packets to thousands of people in need in Central America and the Caribbean. We feel extremely blessed to have been given the opportunity to have executed these programs.

Our program of *Port Resiliency Program* (PReP), has successfully partnered with FedEx to provide technical, material, and strategic tools to support ports facing complex challenges both during and after a crisis event. It is our vision that the program will be expanded eventually to all the airports in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Long Term Concerns and Challenges:

Our ministry is concerned that without adequate pastoral care, Cuban Christians remain especially vulnerable to the influence of cults. Our prayer is that Cuba's growing church urgently needs leaders with a solid foundation in God's word so that the gospel message is not compromised.

We have been increasingly challenged by the demands of the needs of the church and the moral decay and spiritual vacuum we witness in Cuba. As such, we will increase further the programs to train pastors and help empower the local church. We will continue to provide resources and expertise to help advance the fundamental freedoms, organizational skills, education, and social services that are the foundation of a healthy society. And we will also continue as an organization to be committed to serving people with disabilities living in developing

nations.

Every week our staff meets to pray and uplift the ministry's program activities to God, blessing organizational needs, partners, donors, and advocates. A discussion based on a weekly devotional follows, inspiring the staff to reflect on Jesus Christ. Our desire is to focus on Christ in all our decision making and character development. This ministry is His ministry: He knows what is best for us. We humbly submit to his Lordship and authority as he submitted to His Heavenly Father (Matt. 22:42).

Grace, peace, and love be yours in abundance!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teo A. Babun, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Teo A. Babun, Jr.
President & CEO

Our strength is in the trust we have earned over the last 23 years.

