



# The Sower's Hands

Issue 73: Spring 2024

Newsletter by Hope Seeds International Inc

An exciting fund matching opportunity - doubles your donation to Hope Seeds



1999-2024  
**Hope Seeds**  
International Inc  
25 YEARS OF SERVICE



The Message of  
**HOPE**



**\$eed X 2**

Presented by the  
Community Foundation of Sarasota County  
[www.givingchallenge.org](http://www.givingchallenge.org)

**April 9 - April 10, 2024 • Noon to Noon**

## Celebrating 25 Years of Service and Planting Hope!

Since its beginning in 1999, HSI has served over 60 countries, sent 20+ million packets of quality garden seed, partnered with over 400 faith-based organizations and missionaries, shared the hope we have in Christ by including the Gospel message in every Family Pack of seeds, sponsored and conducted discipleship and garden training programs, sponsored and conducted VBS-style Bible Garden Schools, implemented Mustard Seed Projects, and sent volunteer missionaries through HopeCorps.

**How did Hope Seeds begin?** It all started with a mission trip from Hope Lutheran Church over 25 years ago. A mission team was formed to carry out various ministry projects and show Christ's love to the people of Haiti. Seeds were also donated for the team to distribute. Out of all the ministry conducted, what had the most impact? The Seeds! Hope Church received numerous calls asking for more seeds so that the people could grow their own food and...**Hope Seeds was born!**

*1 John 3:18 "Dear Children, let us not love with words or tongue but with action and in truth."*

As we like to say at HSI, **it all starts with a seed.** A seed planted in the ground and a seed planted in the heart. The seeds and training not only prepare people to care for their families, but they open the doors to share the gospel. It can be very difficult for those who are hungry and hurting to hear and receive God's Word. However, when we show the love of Christ, not only with words but with action, we prepare the soil of their hearts so that the seed of the Gospel may be heard, received, and grow to produce a harvest.

**Double your gift and impact** during the 2024 Giving Challenge, an exciting 24-hour giving event taking place from Noon to Noon (Eastern Time) on April 9th and 10th. The Giving Challenge is presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation. To be matched, gifts must be made online through The Giving Challenge website. All individual gifts from \$25 - \$100 using a major credit/debit card will be matched and are tax-deductible.

To participate, visit HSI's dedicated page:

<https://www.givingchallenge.org/organizations/hope-seeds-inc>



### Boats, Planes, & Suitcases: The Journey of a Seed

After 8 months of drought in 2022 and the resulting crop failures, it was finally starting to rain again in Northwest Haiti, where Bruce Robinson, a **Crossworld** missionary serves with **ODRINO**, a local Haitian community development organization that constructs systems to provide clean water. In faith of continued rain and amid extremely hungry villages, Bruce Robinson made an **urgent request for seed**, to which HSI responded by sending 5,000 Hope Garden Family Packs between August and September 2023.

Due to the challenges and hurdles that Robinson knew he might encounter in the process of getting supplies into Haiti, he utilized several methods of transport which included sending several boxes of seeds via **Missionary Flights International**, more containers by boat, and packing over 100 pounds of Family Packs into their suitcases as they themselves travelled with a team to Haiti. **And God's hand clearly guided the seeds' journeys to the desperate villages.**

The seeds that were sent via Missionary Flights International arrived in Haiti shortly thereafter. Once through customs, they were released and available for pickup in Port-au-Prince. Inter-city travel in Haiti is increasingly difficult, but it just so happened that one of the ODRINO team members was already in Port-au-Prince for an appointment. He was able to pick the seeds up from MFI and travel with them by helicopter back to the countryside where they were to be distributed.



More Family Packs of seeds were packed into the group's 10 suitcases – 2 of which had been packed *full* of seeds. The plane arrived late into Port-au-Prince, which made customs a breeze as the agents were tired and anxious to get home. Bringing seed into Haiti for humanitarian aid is legal, but can sometimes result in fees or delays. But because of the late arrival, none of the bags were even opened!

The team was then flown to the countryside on a UN helicopter that had enough space for them and their 10 bags. Bruce Robinson shared with us that between the time they left their home in Florida and their arrival in Northwest Haiti, they had counted seven miracles! Furthermore, this is the rainiest year he has ever seen, and the **seeds have been producing bountifully**. Robinson shared that families who have received seed have even been able to take baskets of extra tomatoes to the market! ODRINO will be bringing more seed to Haiti this year once they are able to do so safely.

Just as God provides for communities around the world through the seeds we send, He also provides a way for them to get where they need to go in spite of difficulties that may be encountered along the way. We can have peace knowing that God will arrange and use every circumstance for the good of His people and for His glory (Romans 8:28). And He is the Savior who is able to use us as His hands and feet in a world that so desperately needs His hope. Please pray for Hope Seeds, for the ODRINO missionaries, for continued rain, and for the people in the communities being ministered to throughout Haiti.



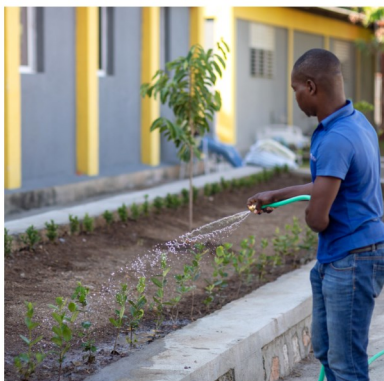
**Hope Health Action** a ministry serving Haitians with disabilities, was one of 56 organizations that received a box of Family Packs through our **Agape Flights** outreach last summer. In addition to growing food for their hospital, **Hope Health Action** has shared seeds with local families – including Foster Families who have taken in children with disabilities who had been abandoned. Hope Health Action also planted seeds in their new Rehabilitation Community Garden. What was once a dry and empty space behind their facility is now a **beautiful community garden** where patients with physical disabilities or who are recovering from injuries can learn valuable skills and enjoy fellowship together. Hope Seeds is blessed to partner with Hope Health Action to love as Christ would those who are so often disregarded, and to show them the dignity they possess as image-bearers of God!

## News From Kitale, Kenya

Our partnership with **Liberty Christian Faith Ministry** continues to grow and produce fruit in Africa. This year we have already started work in two additional villages where we will be working with Widows to provide seeds, training in **Farming God's Way**, provide clean water, and conduct discipleship. The goal is to help these Widows provide for their families in a way that is sustainable and to build a healthy, productive Church.

Also, a new center for activities is being constructed by Liberty Christian Faith Ministry which will be used as a multipurpose building in Kitale. This center will provide clean water, education in gardening, a place for worship, a seed processing and saving center, a grain mill for processing flour, and serve as a facility that can be used by the community for additional needs.

A HopeCorps team will be traveling back to Kenya this year to provide additional training and support. Pray for safety as our team travels to this area of the world.





## Last Year's Statistics

**Hope Seeds' outreach grew exponentially in 2023!** Thanks to over 1,000 volunteers who contributed over 11,000 volunteer hours packing seeds and assisting the ministry, we sent 816,961 packets of seeds and 67,149 Hope Garden Family Packs, each containing the Gospel Message of Hope in the local language of the recipients. In 2023, we partnered with over 150 missionaries and organizations in 25 countries!

In addition, HSI sent HopeCorps volunteers to Kenya, ministered to widows and orphans, established Widows' Gardens and wells in 3 villages in Kenya, rescued children from human trafficking, conducted agriculture and discipleship training sessions, provided over 150 Bibles to new believers, and implemented numerous Mustard Seed Projects in Haiti, Kenya, and Uganda.

In 2023, two new programs were adopted by Hope Seeds: Healing River in Kenya and outreach to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in Montana. We are exceedingly grateful to everyone who rose to the occasion to meet so many needs, and for all those who made this possible by giving and praying!

Keep praying for the harvest and ask God how you can **Be the One** to bring **Hope to the Hungry** during the **2024 Giving Challenge**.

## Attention Seasonal Residents

**We need your help!** Please let us know when you will be *changing your address* so we can make the necessary updates. The post office will not forward or return the newsletter (they will toss it) if the address we have on file is not current since we utilize the discounted nonprofit bulk mail service. We don't want you to miss our newsletters, and as always, we want to be good stewards! Thank you!

## Memorials & Honorariums

 **In Memory of:**

 **In Honor of:**

- Chuck Whitmarsh
- Ruth Weinrich
- Jeff Milton
- Mike McKinney
- Derry Abraham
- Andrew Gleisner
- Janice Vogel
- Velma Davis
- Ruth & Erwin Grosshans
- Dorothy Jo Taylor
- David Kuerschner
- Shannon Hames
- Jim Ronda
- Bonnie Zipf
- Patti R Johnson

- Vic & Kathy Engelhardt
- Luella Franke
- Rad & Sandra Hazelip
- Bob Marquardt
- Kristin Gilbert
- John Gilbert
- Dave & Maxine Balsbaugh
- Art & Karen Pabst
- Gareth Olson
- Ralph Benz
- Bob & Sylvia Dunker
- Kathy Engelhardt
- Dr. & Mrs. Joe Mattox
- Kirkwood ACM

## March 31st deadline to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent members who qualify may call 1-800-847-4836 by March 31st and ask for Thrivent Choice®. You will be connected to a representative who will help you allocate your Choice Dollars® to Hope Seeds.

Direct your  
Thrivent Choice  
Dollars  
Today!




**2024 GIVING CHALLENGE**  
Be The One  
Presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County

» HAPPENING  
**APRIL 9-10**  
**NOON TO NOON**  
[GivingChallenge.org](http://GivingChallenge.org)



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**Plant A Seed!  
Feed A Soul!**



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