



# OPEN HANDS

Developing community and reducing poverty through Christ-centered savings groups and training programs.

## A Small Beginning to Lasting Impact

In a small Kenyan village close to Lake Victoria, the widow Anjeline faced the same daily question: How will I provide for my daily needs? Anjeline had no savings account, credit cards, government programs, or relatives which could help. But she did have determination and a few small coins that often remained in her pocket at the end of each day. Each week at her savings group meeting, Anjeline brought these coins which she put into savings. Determined to use the discipline she was being taught as a savings group member, Anjeline continued to say no to snacks and other frivolous things and yes to saving. The savings seemed small and insignificant each time, but faithful savings do great things.

Each week, she faithfully saved, and each week her coin pile grew. After a couple of months she was able to buy a chicken which started laying eggs. Instead of eating the eggs, Anjeline let her hen hatch the eggs and soon her one hen grew into a flock. As the flock increased, she began to dream about other more valuable animals. With the money she earned from selling chickens, she bought a ewe sheep which also multiplied, but at a naturally slower pace than the chickens.

First Anjeline's ewe produced twin lambs which grew up and produced more lambs. Some of these lambs were sold, and before long, as she saved the money from selling eggs and chickens and lambs, she had enough money to buy a cow.

Anjeline felt very blessed by God. She thought back to her original question, "How will I provide for my daily needs?" Through her savings group God led her to save a few coins

each week. As she consistently saved her coins instead of buying something enticing, she ended up with first a chicken, then a sheep and finally a cow. The cow made her feel like God cared for her and that she was capable of making good use of the resources that God provided.

Today Anjeline no longer asks how she will provide for her daily needs. Beginning with the little that she had, and learning about stewardship through God's Word in her savings group, Anjeline has regained her dignity as she gained hope for the future.

This is the first story in a seven-day series titled "Coins to Cows." The stories share real experiences from members of savings groups around the world and include simple lessons about work, saving, and helping others. More information on the next page.





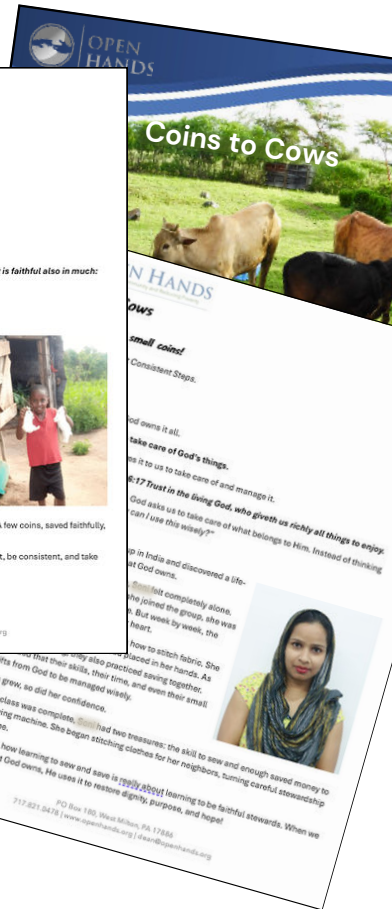
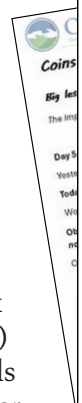
# OPEN HANDS

## Coins to Cows

“Those lessons would be helpful here in the United States too” is a response that we often hear when explaining the principles that Open Hands teaches individuals and communities facing poverty. That response is a good reminder that the principles of Scripture are not limited by geography or by economic circumstance. Whether we have little or much, the same truths apply to all of us.

We have created a series of seven short stories titled Coins to Cows that we hope will be a helpful resource for families and ministries who want to teach children principles of stewardship in a simple and engaging way. These stories are designed to work well as a giving opportunity during Vacation Bible School (VBS.) They help children see the impact as they learn about individuals who are discovering important lessons about how God, the owner of all things, calls us to be faithful stewards of what He has placed in our hands. As we understand this more clearly, it shapes how we live. It leads us to gratitude for what we have been given and encourages us to live with open hands toward others.

**Please contact Dean if you would like to receive this packet of information. [dean@openhands.org](mailto:dean@openhands.org) - 717-821-0478**



## Give Hope Today!



1

### Pray for Our Programs:

- Pray for individuals to come to Christ through our programs.
- Pray for ongoing progress in lifting people out of poverty.

2

### Give to Lift Families Out of Poverty:

- Send a check, payable to Open Hands, to: PO, Box 180, West Milton, PA 17886
- Donate at: [www.openhands.org/donate](http://www.openhands.org/donate)
- Your donations are tax deductible.



**A savings group in Barranquilla, Colombia celebrating the end of the savings cycle.**

“If there be among you a poor man...thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need.” *Deut. 15:7-8*



## General Updates

*At the end of the six-month savings cycle, this group in Haiti saved a total of \$1,450.*

After being with Open Hands for 11 years, Joe Kuepfer has transitioned out of the organization. Joe and his family spent a few months in Haiti before moving to Kenya in 2015 to serve as the regional director of East Africa. In 2020, he and his family returned to the United States for a one-year sabbatical. After completing his sabbatical, Joe rejoined Open Hands in September 2021 to serve as the executive director. We would like to thank Joe for the time and energy that he invested in the program in East Africa and for his leadership as the executive director. We wish Joe and his family God's blessing as they move forward and find what God has next for them. Since Joe's transition out of Open Hands, Lyndon Swarey is serving as the interim executive director.

In December, Raquelle Yoder concluded her time of service at Open Hands. She served on the Marketing Team and as the communications assistant. Her contributions to the team will be missed. May God bless you, Raquelle, as you continue to serve Him in whatever place He calls you to.

Mario Cota, the interim Asia regional director, visited India in January. The program continues to grow with a total of 103 groups as of the end of December. Plans are being made to train up to 65 new facilitators sometime in the near future, and we anticipate significant growth over next year. Mario is also planning to visit the program in Nepal and complete a program assessment.

Lyndon Swarey and Walcus Vital, the Haiti country director, have plans to visit the savings group program in Haiti. During the trip, Walcus is planning to lead a one-day seminar with the staff to cover topics on leadership, building healthy teams, and facilitating groups.



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PO Box 180, West Milton, PA 17886  
(570) 800-2123 | [openhands.org](http://openhands.org)

## Our Mission

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Open Hands partners with conservative Anabaptist missions to provide a framework to help the poor without creating dependency. We form, train, and mentor Christ-centered savings and credit groups. The groups are a safe and sustainable place for members to save and borrow funds for investments, small business, and emergencies. This results in the poor finding greater financial stability, local churches being strengthened, and mission organizations being able to better focus on church planting.

## The Board

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