Fall 2026

OPEN HANDS

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

The Ministry of an Open Hands Facilitator

By Kenneth Goli, Kenya Program Facilitator

Ken is the field coordinator for Nakuru, Kenya. He provides monitoring, evaluation, and training support to the facilitators, as well as facilitating several groups. Today, he's blessed us with an in-depth look at what it's like to be an Open Hands facilitator.

I began working with Open Hands 2013 as a volunteer facilitator after being introduced to the ministry by Lyndon Swarey. My journey started when I established the first savings group in my church. At first, it was not easy because many people were unfamiliar with the concept of a savings group as a ministry that promotes biblical stewardship. However, by God's grace, the church embraced the idea.

Since then, I have had the privilege of mobilizing churches and communities, introducing them to the vision of Christ-centered savings groups. The groups start with an orientation, where members voluntarily come together because they share a common vision and purpose. It has been encouraging to see the ministry grow across different regions as churches and communities embrace savings groups.

A facilitator does not own or control the group but is there to guide its formation and development. First, they help members develop their group policies based on the "4 Ms": Mission, Membership, Money, and Management. These policies become the foundation that guides the group's activities and decision-making.

After the policies are established, the facilitator leads the group through the Chalmers Savings Group Handbook, which focuses on group leadership, management, and the House of Principles—the backbone of Open Hands' ministry. The second training manual, Family Finance, teaches members



faithful stewardship, budgeting, saving consistently, avoiding unnecessary debt, and making financial decisions that honor God. Finally, there is a four-part series of business curriculum that teaches how to begin a small business and grow it to a point where it can give back to the community.

Open Hands' mission is to empower savings groups through Christ-centered training and technical advice. Its vision is brothers and sisters lovingly saving together, reconciled in their relationships. Facilitators guide meetings, provide training, and encourage members to uphold to their mission according to their agreed policies. Facilitators equip members to make wise decisions together, fostering ownership, accountability, and sustainability. Open Hands also supports facilitators financially, spiritually, and through ongoing training so they can serve effectively.



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Savings Groups Open Doors

"Amrita" is a young mother of two who grew up in a Hindu family in Southeast Asia. A few years ago, Amrita found Christ. Moved with compassion for the migrants in her community, Amrita began working among them as an unpaid volunteer.

As Amrita saw the financial and spiritual needs of the poverty-stricken migrants around her, she sought ways she could help. When she found out about the Open Hands savings group program, she trained to be a facilitator. Facilitating savings groups gave her the opportunity to teach about how broken relationships with God, self, and others can lead to poverty. As she helped the migrants get to a better place financially, she was also able to teach them spiritually.

That's when Amrita realized that savings groups could be a door to church planting. As the people in the group began mending their broken relationships with God, self, and others, Amrita helped them form themselves into churches. In a mere five years, Amrita has helped start 10 house churches among the migrant population in her community.





A Prayer for Wisdom

When Solomon became king of Israel, he did not ask God for riches, fame, the death of his enemies or long life. Rather he asked for an understanding heart to discern between good and evil and judge Israel fairly. Wisdom gave Solomon discernment, humility, and a moral framework within which to make decisions.

As I take on the responsibilities of executive director, I realize I need wisdom and discernment just as Solomon did to fulfill the responsibilities of this position. Please pray that God grants me the clarity and understanding to lead effectively in this new role.

- Lyndon Swarey, Executive Director

"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

- **Haiti:** We are deeply saddened by the passing of Roland Delvacy, the Haiti Program Manager, and ask you to join us in praying for his family. Roland has been faithfully serving with Open Hands since 2011. Lyndon Swarey was able to travel there for the funeral.
- **Colombia:** The earthquake in Colombia did not directly affect any Open Hands savings group members, but many group members have family and friends who were affected. Harold Diaz, the Colombia/Venezuela program manager, is working with local relief efforts to get aid into Colombia.
- **Colombia, Venezuela, El Salvador, and Guatemala** have many savings groups whose savings cycles are concluding this fall. The conclusion of a savings cycle is an exciting time for savings groups, with much celebrating as group members collect the money they have been saving. After a savings cycle ends, a savings group usually re-forms, allowing more members to join, and begins a new savings cycle.
- **Mexico:** Dietrich Miller, Director of Latin America, is training a facilitator in Creel, Mexico. This is exciting as it will lead to savings groups in Dietrich's hometown of Creel.
- **Nepal:** Kumar, the Country Director in Nepal, is planning an event in October to train new facilitators and provide continuing education for existing facilitators.
- **South Asia:** The Open Hands program in a restricted South Asian country continues to experience strong growth. Lyndon Swarey is planning to attend a three-day training there in September. This training will equip 20 new leaders who plan to present the program to local pastors.
- **Thailand:** In August, Mario Cota held a facilitator training event in Thailand. 12 new facilitators were trained, and some of the current facilitators joined for continued education. Most of these facilitators will work among Burmese refugees.

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 (your donations are tax deductible).*
- *Sustaining Hope Sponsorships - $50 a month provides one entire savings group with biblical stewardship and financial literacy training.*



Jyoti, a group member in Nepal, took a loan through her group to start a chicken-raising business. She now has 40 chickens, which provide her with income.

OPEN HANDS

PO Box 180, West Milton, PA 17886
(570) 800-2123 | openhands.org

Our Mission

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.

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