Dear friends,

SEO really appreciates your financial support and prayers. You understand our cause and you believe in us! Here is the report about SEOs activities over the past year:

The parish continues to pay salaries for the Manager (myself) and the Agriculture Officer. SEO could do with one more full-time staff, but, we do not have the funds. We use some of the monies you sent us to pay part-time people to give us whatever technical assistance we need. This mainly has to do with the training of entrepreneurs and the development of their products. We are blessed with volunteers from UB who help us out for 2 years then move on to full-time jobs. One of our volunteers got a scholarship to study in England and another one will be leaving for Earth University in Costa Rica; Donisico continues to do well in Taiwan.

The high school scholarship program is going well, we provide uniform, text books, lunch and mentoring. We stay connected to the students, parents, teachers and school.

The nutrition program in Dolores and Otoxha is going well. Over the last 3 years we worked with a set of students starting in Std. 3. We are now starting a new cycle, again working with new students in Std. 3. We continue to grow tomato and sweet pepper, and have introduced mango and tambran fruit trees. We have the assistance of a UB student Program Promoter in Dolores and a high school student Pogram Promoter in Otoxha.

SEO has thoroughly research the marketing of the products made by the local entrepreneurs. But, found it does not have the capacity nor the legal authority to operate such a business. Besides needing to be an incorporated organization, marketing is a full-time business and has a life of its own! SEO does not have the mandate, human and financial resources nor capacity to operate such a business. We have also, observed that people want the products for little or nothing; I guess this has something to do with the culture of the church. SEO have tried to connect with the visiting service/mission groups to assist us in marketing the products, but there has been no commitment on their part. SEO has decided that it will not get into the business of the actual marketing, but, will help entrepreneurs to connect to markets. SEO will continue to focus on the identifying and training of the entrepreneurs, assist them with product improvement and financing through micro-credit.

SEO has linked up with Building People Movement (BPM), a local NGO, for marketing purposes. This organization was involved in the craft business before SEO. And, when the former Pastor said craft does not pay, and gave orders to stop it, it was through BPM the work continued because I saw the potential it had to economically empower the people.

There are some products developed through SEO that we have branded – Belizean Flavors. Sales from Belizean Flavors products will be going to SEO. BPM products are branded Maya Weave. We still have an operating policy that requires the entrepreneurs to be paid for their products instantly, before it is put on the market. BPM will be officially launching the marketing web-site early next year.

People throughout the Toledo District has been clamoring for our services. We serve as a hub for the services we offer, see attached document, and we are also an information, referral and networking agency. We are in the business of growing people! Our vehicle of 7 years started to mal-function, we were without a vehicle for 3 months. We recently got a new one. We used a tiny portion of your grant to SEO to assist in defraying the cost.

For over a year now we have a new Pastor, which is quite refreshing! He seems to be more organize and open to new ideas. Of course we will never forget the pass Pastor and his aid in assisting to establishing SEO.

In 2014 we will be evaluating the work we have done over the last ten years! And, we will be developing a new strategic plan, and funding proposals. We look forward to continue making a difference in the lives of GOD’s people that we serve, and reduce poverty in the Toledo District.

We ask you to continue to support us as we labor to bring true development to the families, communities and district of Toledo.

It is great to have you as a partner!

Blessings,

Dorla