

## **Dear Supporters of Hands of Hope,**

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your unwavering support of Hands of Hope throughout the years. Whether you have contributed financially, volunteered on mission trips, or uplifted us through your prayers, please know that your dedication has made a profound impact. By God's grace and with your help, the children and communities we serve have experienced countless blessings. Today, more than ever, we need your continued support as we embark on a new chapter for Hands of Hope.

After much prayerful consideration, the board has made the significant decision to realign our organization in order to better meet the needs of the communities we serve in the Dominican Republic. Effective November 1st, 2024, Hands of Hope will no longer operate as a child sponsorship organization. Instead, we will focus all donations on enhancing and expanding the educational facilities in the Dominican Republic. Additionally, we will be transitioning out of our partnerships with the communities of Capulin and Palamara in order to concentrate our efforts more fully on the facilities in El Almirante and Arroyo Indio. We are working closely with local leadership in these communities to ensure a smooth transition, connecting them with local churches to sustain the programs we have started.

I know many of you may be wondering why this change is necessary. While there are many factors that contributed to this decision, three key reasons stand out:

- 1. Growing Challenges in Communication and Outreach**

As our communities evolve, so too must our methods of support. El Almirante, once a smaller community, has become part of a bustling city with families frequently moving in and out. Arroyo Indio, a rural area with a large population of Haitian immigrants, also presents challenges in terms of consistent communication and tracking. These realities have made it increasingly difficult to manage child sponsorship effectively, and by shifting our focus to educational programs, we can continue planting seeds of faith and knowledge without the constraints of these logistical hurdles.

- 2. Building Stronger Community Relationships**

Our mission has always been to serve all children in the communities we support, whether or not they were part of our sponsorship program. However, in the past, certain resources—such as food boxes and school supplies—were reserved for sponsored children. Moving forward, we aim to distribute our resources more equitably, serving a greater number of families and fostering deeper integration into the communities. This shift will allow us to expand our outreach and make a more profound impact on those we serve.

- 3. Realigning with Our Core Mission**

Hands of Hope has always prioritized the development of children in the Dominican Republic, and this will not change. What is changing is our approach. By narrowing our focus exclusively to education and the spreading of God's Word, we can strengthen our efforts and provide a clearer, more focused mission. In the past, we've extended ourselves to address health needs, provide home furnishings, and more. While all of these efforts have been meaningful, they have also stretched our resources thin. By honing in on education, we will provide a more stable and impactful foundation for the children we serve.

This decision has not been made lightly, and we understand that many of you have formed deep connections with the children you have sponsored. This is not an end to those relationships, but rather an evolution aimed at better serving these children and many others. As Proverbs 4:25-26 reminds us: *"Let your eyes look directly ahead, and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet, and all your ways will be established."* It is with this vision that we move forward, establishing a brighter future for the children of the Dominican Republic.

We are excited about the opportunities this change will bring, including:

- Expanded reading programs
- Increased number of teachers
- Introduction of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs
- Career education initiatives
- Technology upgrades for enhanced learning

In the coming days, I will personally reach out to our dedicated donors to discuss these changes in more detail. Should you wish to speak with me directly, please do not hesitate to call me at (608) 520-5497. I trust that you will stand with us as we embark on this exciting new phase of our mission, and I hope that many others will be inspired to join us in supporting this vital work.

Together, with faith and purpose, we will continue to change lives.

Warm regards,

Douglas Ready  
Board President  
Hands of Hope

608-520-5497

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