



**FAITH IN
ACTION** 
INTERNATIONAL

ORGANIZING *for* BETTER LIVES

2024 Global Impact Report 

In 2024, more than eight thousand people in 290 communities in a dozen countries in Central America, Mexico, Haiti, Africa, and Eastern Europe organized for better lives as part of Faith in Action International.

People joined together to channel public investment into priorities they set for their families, communities, and countries.

- **Farmers in Haiti** won seeds and technical assistance from agronomists to adapt to climate change to feed their families and neighbors.
- **Families in El Salvador** won deeds to their properties to bring electricity and water to their communities.
- **Public housing residents in Hungary** won long-delayed repairs to their apartments so they could keep roofs over their heads.
- **Muslims and Christians in Northern Ghana** joined together to bring technical senior high schools to their communities so youth don't have to migrate for better lives.

With support from new donors, foundations, and partners, our network grew in 2024 – with new organizations getting off the ground in Mexico, Tanzania, and Namibia.

This report highlights how people are organizing to improve their lives and hold their governments accountable at a time when democracy and social justice are under threat worldwide.

We invite you to join us in building a world where everyone has what they need to thrive and a say over the decisions that shape their lives!

BY THE NUMBERS



▶ **WHERE WE WORK**

Our network is growing! We now support multi-faith community organizing in 12 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe.

In 2024, we made progress in helping our affiliates in Haiti, El Salvador, Ghana, and Rwanda grow their footprints to shape larger policies and systems and strengthen organizing in neighboring countries, in Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Tanzania, Kenya, and Namibia. We also support grassroots organizing efforts in Hungary and Slovakia.




▶ THEORY OF CHANGE

People know what their families, communities, and countries need to develop and prosper. Too often, they are left on the sidelines by their governments and well-meaning development projects. Participating in organizing through Faith in Action International affiliates equips people with tools to have a say over decisions that shape their lives. People solve community problems, hold officials accountable, and win policy changes that address the root causes of poverty.

Don't do for people what they can do for themselves; don't speak for people when they can speak for themselves.

The 290 community-based teams that meet every week or two as part of our network are crucibles that transform people from passive observers to active leaders for change. People listen to their neighbors, prioritize community needs, research solutions, negotiate with officials, and hold assemblies to show their power. They propose policy changes through national campaigns, monitor elections, fight corruption, and channel public resources into the most marginalized communities.

Bringing people together across faith traditions to work for the common good reduces social and political polarization. It creates a foundation for lasting social progress and democracy.

	LOCAL	NATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
Democracy 	Creating democratic accountability between people and their elected officials.	Building multi-faith civic power to counter corruption and authoritarianism.	Building public support for international rules that protect democracy and human rights.
Development 	Driving development based on priorities set by local residents.	Channeling domestic resources into development prioritized by residents in the most marginalized communities	Changing how aid institutions operate to follow the lead of civic organizations with deep grassroots bases.
Policy Change 	Local organizing campaigns drive the design and implementation of national policy campaigns.	National campaigns on land rights, climate, and social spending reorient governments to inclusive development.	International campaigns re-focus U.S. and international policy on the root causes of poverty and migration.



OPODHA leaders gather to plant together and organize loan funds in the absence of a functioning government and economy.

▶ SEEDS OF HOPE IN HAITI

Despite half of all Haitians facing hunger, little functioning government, and rising insecurity, the People's Organization for the Development of Haiti (OPODHA) persisted in organizing for change in Northeast and North Haiti in 2024. Grassroots leaders in 64 communities helped small farmers plant crops and adapt to climate change, prevented conflict, repaired roads and water systems, and pooled their funds and labor to survive.



We Plant Today So We Can Feed Ourselves Tomorrow

In 2022, after listening to more than 4,000 small-scale farmers, OPODHA launched a campaign to help farmers adapt to climate change. In 2023, OPODHA partnered with St. Barnabas Agricultural Center to create the Northeast Haiti Community Seed Bank, which provided farmers in seven communities with high-quality seeds and technical assistance from agronomists. In 2024, OPODHA secured \$267,500 from the Inter-American Foundation to expand the Seed Bank to 35 communities. OPODHA is pressing aid agencies, NGOs, and the Haitian government to invest in irrigation, catchment basins, and deeper wells to help farmers withstand drought.

Mutual Solidarity Funds

In 2024, OPODHA members contributed 9.4 million gourdes (\$72,000 USD) to mutual solidarity loan funds in 52 communities. These funds make loans available at 2 percent interest so people can buy products at wholesale prices, start businesses, plant crops, and pay school fees. Absent the funds, people must rely on high-interest loans from loan sharks. With GDP per capita in Haiti at \$1,748, the equivalent value of member contributions in the U.S. would be \$3 million.

Rebuilding Haitian Democracy from the Bottom Up

While gangs affiliated with corrupt politicians control most of Port-au-Prince, 4 of 5 Haitians live outside the capital. The challenge facing families in Northeast and North Haiti is finding food and surviving without a functioning government or economy. As Florcie Lareche Tyrell, OPODHA's director, said, "We cannot count on the government to protect us or waste time complaining. We must stay vigilant and continue organizing." OPODHA teams repair roads, clear drainage systems, clean their communities, and operate cooperatives to generate income. Each summer, they hold elections for officers for each of the 64 OPODHA teams. With local elections outside Port-au-Prince possible in 2025, OPODHA is doing what it can to lay the groundwork for restoring democracy and sustainable development in Haiti.

By the numbers



64
Community Organizations



5,000
Grassroots Leaders



\$70,837
Member Contributions to Loan Funds (equivalent value in USD of \$3m)



7
communities successfully plant and harvest crops as a result of a Seed Bank



\$267,500
funding from the Inter-American Foundation to expand the Seed Bank



COFOA leaders meet in El Salvador to fight for land titles and public services in their communities.

▶ IMPROVING LIFE IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO THROUGH DISCIPLINED COMMUNITY ORGANIZING



Communities of Faith Organizing for Action (COFOA) has grown into a large and influential organization. Almost every day in 2024, the Salvadoran media covered COFOA's efforts to bring public investment to marginalized communities, win land titles for families, and protect the country's democratic institutions. COFOA's expansion efforts in Honduras and Guatemala are taking root, with leaders beginning to win concrete improvements in their communities.

In El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, 161 teams of COFOA leaders meet weekly to organize their neighbors and negotiate with officials to bring schools, electricity, water, and other infrastructure to their communities. In El Salvador, grassroots leaders meet monthly at a regional and national level to campaign for land rights, health care, and fair elections. Through COFOA's disciplined leadership development and organizing, tens of thousands of people are improving their lives and building a better future for their countries.

Channeling Investment into Neglected Communities in Central America

Each of COFOA's 161 local organizing teams has prioritized development needs for their communities. Based on listening to every family in the community, these priorities provide the basis for negotiating with mayors and pressing national authorities to release funding meant to support community development.

In 2024, COFOA leaders celebrated the completion of development projects worth \$430,000 and presented projects to decision-makers worth more than \$20.8 million.

- Twenty-five families in Sitio Viejo, San Salvador, celebrated receiving electricity in their homes as part of a campaign for electricity in ten communities. Vanessa Acosta turned her lights on for the first time on June 7. "This changed my life completely," she said. "Now my kids can do their homework, I can charge my phone, and I store food so my family can eat."
- In Santa Isabel de Nahuizalco, COFOA leaders celebrated a new school for 85 children.
- In the rural Cedros, Honduras, 173 families won clean water.

By the numbers



161
Local Organizing Committees



1,473
Leaders meeting every one or two weeks



\$430,000
in new investment in completed development projects



\$20.8 million
worth of development projected proposed



26,647
families would benefit from these projects



500+
families receive titles to their land

These and dozens of other concrete organizing victories improve people's lives, create hope that change is possible, and give grassroots leaders invaluable experience negotiating with officials that they can use to drive larger changes in policies and systems.

Slow But Steady Progress in the Fight for Land Rights in El Salvador

In 2024, COFOA helped five hundred families in 33 communities obtain property titles. COFOA held six public events highlighting the need to reform the country's property title system and pressure developers to hand over titles. More than 110 developments, home to 8,000 families, now participate in COFOA's REBIRTH land rights campaign. COFOA leaders and staff are frustrated by the government's slow pace of action. However, in 2024, they continued to meet with National Housing Minister Michele Sol and her staff to press for titles for all 350,000 Salvadoran families who've been defrauded of their land by unscrupulous developers.

Launching a New National Health Care Campaign in El Salvador

In October 2024, more than one thousand COFOA leaders joined with the doctors and health workers from the Medical College and the Medical Workers Union to launch a national healthcare campaign. COFOA and its allies presented a petition signed by more than 10,000 people at the Salvadoran Ministry of Health. The campaign advocates for constructing a new hospital in Sonsonate, which would serve 8,000 families, and increased funding for medical supplies and salaries in the health system. As with COFOA's other campaigns, the organization holds large public events at public buildings and the Presidential House while working to enter into negotiations with the government officials responsible for health policy.

Monitoring Elections and Protecting Democracy in El Salvador

As part of a collaborative project with other Salvadoran civic organizations, COFOA trained more than 300 grassroots leaders as election observers. COFOA leaders organized forums with 32 candidates who signed pledges to address specific priorities identified by residents if elected. COFOA also joined with the Salvadoran Catholic Church and other religious leaders to oppose actions by the Salvadoran government to undermine the independence of judges and revoke the law that prohibited mining in El Salvador.

Organizing Takes Root in Honduras

With support from Archbishop José Vicente Nácher Tatay, COFOA organizers are now working in 16 rural communities in two departments outside Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. In 2024, 4,177 families benefited from local improvements won as a result of community organizing. Families won electricity, clean water, paved streets, and sewage systems. On August 6, 2024, 104 people from Villa Altagracia gathered for a religious celebration to mark their success in bringing electricity to their community 17 years after it was founded.

Tackling the Root Causes of Migration in Guatemala

COFOA organizers are working with young people and residents in six communities in the Sololá and Chimaltenango Departments of Guatemala to improve living conditions that drive many Guatemalans to migrate. In 2024, COFOA leaders from multiple communities began an organizing campaign to address the environmental contamination of Lake Atitlán, one of the largest Volcanic lakes in Central America and the most beautiful lakes in the world. COFOA is also working with national religious leaders through Centinelas for the Dignity of the State and the Root Causes Initiative to restore the rule of law and free elections in Guatemala.

Growing Faith-Based Organizing in Mexico

In 2024, the Archdiocese of Guadalajara, through its Social Ministry Program, invited Faith in Action International to work with parishes in the diocese to develop a grassroots faith-based organization. The Archdiocese is one of the largest in Latin America, with 514 parishes, 1,125 chapels, 1,688 priests, 2,479 Catholic sisters, and almost six million parishioners. Twenty-five clergy and lay leaders met monthly to develop this new organizing effort. Key issues include access to clean water, sanitation, the cost and quality of health care, and the need to strengthen the social fabric to prevent violence and strengthen democracy in Mexico.



TOP: Carmen, a COFOA organizer in Honduras reports on what grassroots leaders in rural communities in Honduras are achieving. BOTTOM: Celebrating the successful campaign by Guatemalan indigenous, civic, and faith organizations to seat their democratically elected president.

MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS UNITING TO FOCUS GHANA ON DEVELOPMENT



Despite being rich in gold, oil, cocoa, and other natural resources, the Ghanaian government spends less than five percent of its revenue on community development. Muslim and Christian religious leaders and communities have played a key role in strengthening Ghana’s democracy, including during the peaceful national elections in December 2024. Through the FAITH in Ghana Alliance, Muslims and Christians are working to channel more public resources into schools, health clinics, water, sanitation, roads, and other infrastructure in marginalized communities, following the priorities set by residents.

In 2024, FAITH in Ghana built seven new Community Faith Alliances, bringing the total number of communities where the Alliance is organizing to 30. Six Community Alliances negotiated with their district and regional officials to bring water, sanitation, education, and health facilities to their communities. Two began constructing new Technical Senior High Schools to prepare young people for jobs. The Alliance also completed its formal registration as a non-profit organization in Ghana.

FAITH in Ghana Alliance and Faith in Action International partnered on a Sisters in Solidarity international meeting to promote multi-faith women’s leadership and gender equity in development in Ghana.

Honoring the Legacy of Sir Zan Akologo

The death of Samuel “Zan” Akologo, the founder and national coordinator of the FAITH in Ghana Alliance, on January 1, 2025, was a great loss for Ghana. Zan led Caritas Ghana for a decade, advised the African Catholic Bishops, was a leader in the global movement for debt relief, built the FAITH in Ghana Alliance in 2016 to defend Ghana’s democracy, and rebuilt FAITH in Ghana in 2022 as a grassroots multi-faith organizing movement. In 2023, Pope Francis conferred on Zan the Papal Knighthood in the Order of Saint Gregory the Great for his service to the church and humanity. Sir Zan said, “I dedicate the honor to all the poor and vulnerable whose causes and voices I have stood up for in many respects as my deepest faith response! May I never disappoint all the stakeholders who admire me and hope for a just society! AMEN.” Zan believed in the power of people to transform society and mentored and influenced hundreds of people committed to carrying on grassroots multi-faith organizing in Ghana and Africa. He will be missed, but his vision will continue.

By the numbers



Regional Multi-Faith Alliances in **10 of 16 regions**



30 Pilot Community Faith Alliances



Work started on **2 new Technical Senior High Schools**



Zan Akologo showing the religious diversity of FAITH in Ghana Alliance.

▶ MAKING COMMUNITIES RESILIENT TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN RWANDA



Rwanda’s population density and geography make it very vulnerable to intensifying floods, high winds, and droughts. In 2024, grassroots leaders in Rwanda focused on making their communities more resilient to climate change. They obtained and planted more than 45,000 trees in a large-scale reforestation campaign. Listening to their neighbors and meeting with local officials ensured that the government provided enough of the right kind of trees. Jaqueline, a resident in the Gatore community, praised the approach of asking people what they need rather than deciding for them. She said, “The trees planted were friendly to banana plants, bringing shade and thriving.” In contrast, trees provided by the government without input were “useless and died off.”

Responding to climate change is not easy, but grassroots leaders know that reforestation and other changes are needed to protect the clinics, schools, and roads they have struggled to bring to their communities and continue improving life in Rwanda. In 2024, PICO Rwanda leaders celebrated the opening of a new public elementary school in Nyarubuye, staffing, and educational material from the Rwandan Government.

By the numbers



Six
newly hired leader-organizers



21
communities organizing for change



45,000
new trees



Rev. John Rutsindintwarane explaining the organizing process that resulted in the construction of a school and clinic in Nyarubuye, Rwanda.

Spreading Bottom-Up Organizing in Tanzania, Kenya, and Namibia

Pastor John Rutsindintwarane and Fr. Innocent Rugaragu, who lead organizing in Rwanda, are mentoring organizers, clergy, and lay leaders in Kenya, Namibia, and two regions in Tanzania, along the border with Rwanda. MENTOR is in the early stages of supporting grassroots community organizing around access to clean water, electricity, health care, and education in ten Maasai villages in Kajiado County, Kenya. Anglican and Lutheran religious leaders are supporting pilot organizing efforts in 14 communities in Muleba and Ngara districts in the Kagera region of Western Tanzania. With coaching from Rwandan organizers, Pastor Colin Gertze began a pilot organizing process in the Burger's Hoek, Namibia community, where more than 2,000 families have limited public services and face high levels of insecurity.

▶ IMPROVING PUBLIC HOUSING IN HUNGARY

With support from Mandak House, a Lutheran church and community center, public housing tenants are organizing to improve the condition of their apartments and buildings. In 2024, the Józsefváros Tenant Community won a long-sought victory when the local mayor replaced the management of the municipal corporation responsible for maintaining and repairing their apartment buildings. The new management company leadership agreed to meet with the tenants regularly and institute a new tracking and accountability system for repairs.

The Tenant Community also organized tenants in ten public housing buildings that the Orbán government has appropriated to make way for university dorms. Tenants from the buildings targeted for demolition presented their demands for equivalent apartments to government and university officials and are struggling to ensure that 210 families are not left homeless.



Budapest tenant leaders questioning mayoral candidates on what steps they would take to improve public housing.



By the numbers



130
public housing
buildings in
Józsefváros,
Budapest



4,104
apartments

3,200
families



200
families in 10
buildings targeted
for demolition



16
building committees

ADVOCATING FOR SENSIBLE AND JUST DEVELOPMENT AND FOREIGN POLICIES

As Faith in Action International supports bottom-up change, we are also bringing people together across countries to advocate for international policies that promote human rights, democracy, and locally-led development.

In 2024, through the **Root Causes Initiative**, we advocated for work visas for Central Americans to make migration safer. We pushed for greater support from the State Department and USAID for Guatemala's new democratic government.

In 2024, through **A Way Forward in Haiti**, we connected Haitian diaspora faith communities and friends of Haiti with Haitian organizations to stem the flow of weapons to Haiti and promote a democratic government that is free from corruption and accountable to Haitians. It was painful to watch conditions in Haiti deteriorate. However, we believe that two keys to a better future for Haiti are grassroots organizing in Haiti combined with a strong, well-organized Haitian-American lobby for better U.S. policies toward Haiti. By connecting organizing in Haiti and Haitian-American faith communities in the U.S., we are doing what we can to contribute to Haiti's security, development, and self-determination.

Building a Global Learning Community

In January 2024, twenty-four people from the U.S., Ghana, Tanzania, and Namibia traveled to Rwanda to learn from Faith in Action's Rwandan affiliate, People Improving Communities through Organizing (PICO Rwanda). Participants met with grassroots leaders, community organizers, government officials, and religious leaders, attended community meetings, visited local and national genocide memorials, and participated in a regular monthly community work day (Umuganda).

In August 2024, twenty people from the U.S., Mexico, and Namibia traveled to El Salvador to learn about COFOA's structure and organizing method and participate in regional training with grassroots leaders from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Organizers and clergy from Los Angeles and other cities returned home with greater motivation and guidance to organize systematically in the U.S.

In 2024, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Global Ideas for Solutions program renewed our International Learning Exchange, including a multi-year research project to better understand the impact of grassroots organizing on health and well-being in the communities where we work. We signed an agreement with Vanderbilt University's Department of Human and Organizational Development to collaborate on a participatory research project to better understand the impact of faith-based community organizing in El Salvador, Haiti, Ghana, and Rwanda. The research will help us learn from, strengthen, and grow our work.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In 2024, 47 percent of Faith in Action International funding came from contributions for individuals and organizations, vs. 53 percent from foundations. We aim to achieve a 50/50 balance between contributions and grants to grow sustainably. Fundraising from foundations in 2024 included new multi-year funding to support expansion work in Guatemala and Mexico, increased support from family foundations for OPODHA's work in Haiti, and a renewal of funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for our International Learning Exchange.

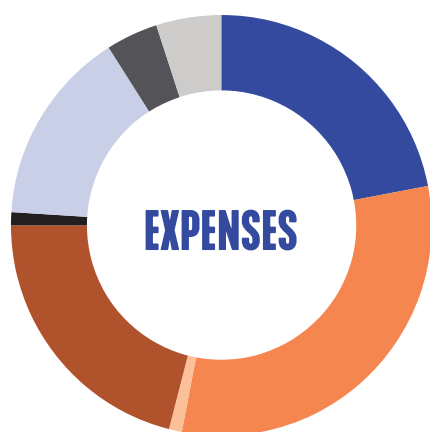
Just over 19 percent of our expenses in 2024 went to personnel, office, travel, and meeting costs, which enabled us to allocate 81 percent of our funding to directly support grassroots organizing in Haiti, Central America, Mexico, Africa, and Eastern Europe.

Our 2024 budget was slightly smaller than 2023. Our personnel, office, and travel costs were down 13 percent, reflecting an effort to keep down our central costs, and our direct contributions to affiliates were down 4 percent. That decline was primarily the result of having provided funding to help capitalize OPODHA's mutual solidarity funds in 2023.

Keeping up with the growth in the number of countries and communities where we are supporting community organizing is our most significant financial challenge. Our ability to grow and continue to have greater impact is tied to raising funds that we can regrant to local organizations to hire community organizers.

COFOA secured a \$145,000 subgrant from a USAID contractor in 2024 to support its grassroots organizing and leadership development work. That funding was aligned with the work COFOA intended to carry out rather than requiring the organization to manage a project. However, the freeze in USAID funding at the start of 2025 has created uncertainty about whether COFOA will receive this funding, which would create a gap in its 2025 budget.

Similarly, the Inter-American Foundation committed \$267,500 over three years to OPODHA to support its work helping farmers adapt to climate change. That funding was also frozen at the start of 2025.



Haiti Support	22%
Central America Support	31%
Mexico Support	1%
Africa Support	21%
Eastern Europe Support	1%
Personnel	15%
Office Expenses	4%
Travel & Meetings	5%

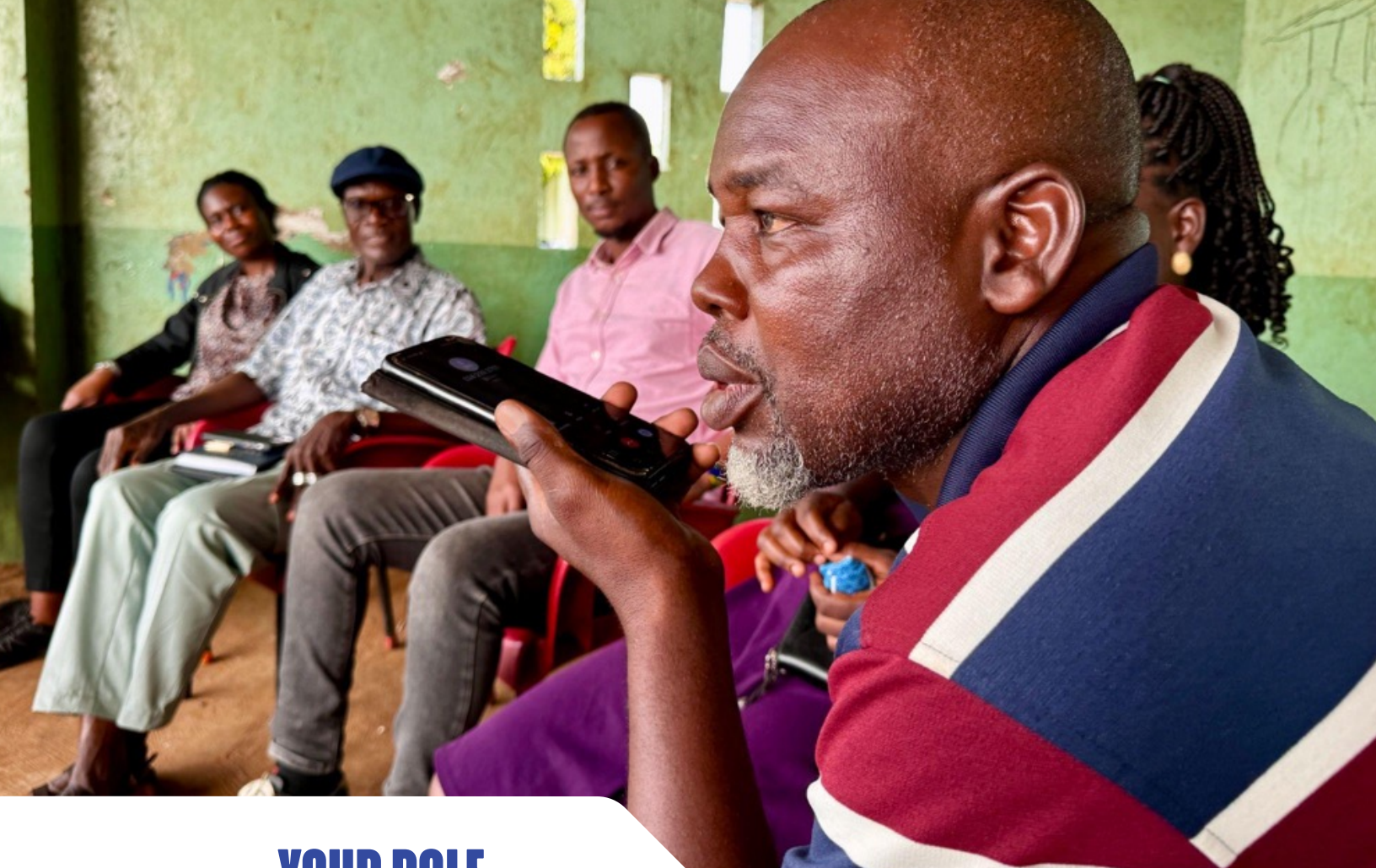


Foundation Grants	53%
Contributions from Organizations	2%
Contributions from Individuals	45%

Income & Expenses

<i>Income</i>	2023	2024
Contributions from Individuals	\$708,380	\$725,188
Contributions from Organizations	\$30,566	\$33,500
Foundation Grants	\$980,424	\$859,555
Total	\$1,719,370	\$1,618,243

<i>Expenses</i>	2023	2024
Personnel	\$317,425	\$241,530
Office Expenses	\$49,179	\$69,340
Trael & Meetings	\$78,444	\$77,864
Haiti support	\$543,594	\$362,125
Central America support	\$421,000	\$495,504
Mexico Expansion	\$15,400	\$24,000
Africa support	\$280,328	\$332,880
Eastern Europe support	\$14,000	\$15,000
Total	\$1,719,370	\$1,618,243



YOUR ROLE

Here are three ways you can help Faith in Action International grow in 2025:

Organize your community and country:

1

We are always looking to partner with people in new communities and countries interested in multi-faith grassroots organizing. If you'd like to talk, contact Gordon Whitman at gwhitman@faithinaction.org.

2

Become a Monthly Donor and help us raise funds: Most funds for the community organizing we support in Africa, Haiti, Central America, and Eastern Europe come from individuals. Please become a monthly donor and consider organizing a giving circle. Please contact Fr. John Baumann at jbaumann@faithinaction.org for more information. We're also happy to talk to you about planned giving.

3

Ask your elected officials to support democracy, human rights, and locally-led development. Check our website, www.faithinactioninternational.org, for opportunities to change U.S. policy toward Haiti and Central America through A Way Forward in Haiti and the Root Causes Initiative.