



ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 2023- DECEMBER 2023



MOVING EARTH TO SHARE HEAVEN

See What God Has Done!

Throughout the year, we tend to focus on accomplishing physical objectives—the wells drilled, the buildings completed, raising funds for that piece of equipment or vehicle, or the short-term teams. I am thankful now for the opportunity to reflect and consider the impact of that work and to invite you to marvel with me at how God brings all things together as a testimony of His Goodness and Holiness. William Carey once said, “Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.” May we continue to expect our God to do great things as we endeavor for Him!

Over 350,000 people were directly impacted in 2023 through the projects and ministry work by FIA and FIA partners in the countries we serve. This is incredible and only possible by the grace of God at work in the lives of our people and our partners who are going, serving, and loving the Lost. Only God knows the heart’s deepest response when a person comes face-to-face with the workings of the Living God, *but I know people cannot walk away unaffected.*

Striving to capture and share the highlights of this year’s ministry is daunting. Facts, figures, and “mountain-top” stories do little to provide recognition of those dedicated men and women who have served faithfully and championed the way. While we celebrate our physical accomplishments, we must recognize our people are critical to this organization’s effectiveness as we engage and accelerate Great Commission partnerships.

Join me in a prayer of thanks for the commitment and service of those the Lord has sent out this year as His witnesses for the sake of the Gospel ministry! While this

is a report of what God has done, it is also the canvas the Lord is using to help us shape our response to the question of “Where do we go from here?” and “How do we move forward to get there?” Tough climbs are ahead. Proverbial (and literal) mountains need to move, and gullies crossed to engage in the work He is calling us to. So, by God’s grace, we keep moving forward. We stay focused on supporting God’s people, pursuing Gospel-centered partnerships, and pushing forward with the Great Commission’s purpose to see people transformed through the power of the Gospel.

Last year, we faced some interesting challenges, some of which we still face today. Looking ahead, we recognize that trials and obstacles to global ministry efforts will force us to adapt our strategy and approach to ongoing mission work. This isn’t a surprise. We move forward confident that even as the Lord has provided, He will continue to make a way. Though the way forward will adapt to the day’s challenges, the goal line of the mission is fixed and remains true—we exist to make Christ known amongst the Least, the Last, and the Lost.

May the road rise to meet us, and may He accomplish His purposes through us. We have unwavering confidence in His plans, trusting that as He uses this mission as an agent of change, He will continue to bring the Lost into the true worship of His Name. Let’s eagerly anticipate where He takes us this year, embracing the challenges and opportunities ahead. ■

Matt Durkee
Executive Director

Matt Durkee | Executive Director

Matt has served with FIA Intl. since 2008 in various roles, and is now serving as Executive Director. From 2009 until 2017, Matt, his wife Megan, and their two children either lived in West Africa or in Ontario, Canada, where they now reside. In addition to FIA leadership and management, Matt leads teams, develops new partners, and speaks about the joys and struggles of international ministry, calling up the next generation. His desire in leading FIA is simple: to focus on what FIA does well, challenge others to join with us, and to make it count for eternity.



“Do not pray for easy lives, pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle.”

—Bishop Phillip Brooks



Our Mission

Friends in Action International supports mission work in areas of limited infrastructure through construction and service projects to speed the Gospel to those who have not heard the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

To see every tribe, tongue, people and nation declare Jesus as Lord!

Our Impact

Community Development Projects



Clean Water Projects



Outreach & Relief Services



Life Skills Training & Education



Short-Term Service Projects & Initiatives





Global Impact

As an organization deeply committed to our partners through construction projects and mission service, we continue to witness the tangible impact of our physical service. Our work goes beyond mere construction; it is about building bridges between culture and community in the places we work, while living out the Gospel. In each project and everywhere we serve, our purpose is to help lead and point people to Jesus.



358,001

people impacted by Gospel
ministry through
Projects and Services



8,700

people supported through
Community Development
Projects (CDPs)



6,310

people supported through
Clean Water Initiatives



4,250

people supported through
Outreach & Relief Services



1,276

people supported through Life-
Skills Training & Education



135

people volunteering or sent out
on short-term service projects
and initiatives

Expansion of Partnership Support

FIA teams on short-term service projects supported partners in Western and Central African countries and Vanuatu (completing missionary house construction); in West Africa, Vanuatu and Nicaragua (providing welding and fabrication services); in Mexico, Vanuatu, Nicaragua, and PNG (mechanical & automotive repair/maintenance services); in the U.S. and Canada (supporting mission partners in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Ontario through construction projects and HVAC and electrical services support); and in West Africa, Mexico, and Vanuatu (clean water initiatives).

Mission Personnel Growth

We are proud to have welcomed 16 new associate members to the organization, each with unique skills and abilities. These individuals, who have completed the FIA ORIENT and ONBOARD programs, serve in key areas throughout the mission. Their roles span from part-time and full-time ministry service to short-term team leadership, Shipping Department management, and internship placements.

Indigenous Church Planting

Key partners throughout FIA's fields of ministry capitalized on relationships established through FIA. They launched outreach and survey trips into new unreached communities, sharing the Gospel through service and chronological teachings. Indigenous partners serving in Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Vanuatu are taking what they have learned and witnessed and, in turn, are perpetuating a people-focused evangelical movement, sharing the Gospel with others within or close to their language and culture. FIA continues to walk with and support this indigenous-owned Kingdom movement.

Where FIA Works

FIA continues to impact missions through full-time international workers, short-term ministry work and volunteer service. People skilled in the various trades (such as carpentry, masonry, electrical work, plumbing, automotive maintenance, and welding) serve alongside national and international Gospel workers to help overcome site-specific infrastructure and development challenges. Skilled and general laborers work with FIA members to provide clean water solutions, assist with community development, and provide various mission support and educational opportunities.

VOLUNTEER TRADE SKILLS

Learn More: [FIAintl.org/get-involved/trips](https://faintl.org/get-involved/trips)



Bible Teaching



Fabrication/Construction



General Labor



Mechanical



Well Drilling

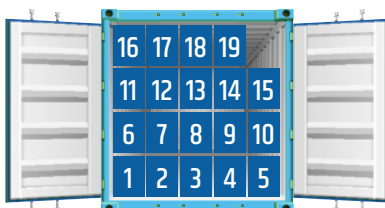


Shipping Ministry

For 24+ years, FIA's Shipping and Warehouse Ministry has been a vital support system, partnering with those who speak life to the Lost using God's Word and pointing to Truth. Our warehouse facility and expertise in rules and regulations have enabled us to send missionary cargo for more than 140 ministries and 900 missionaries in more than 50 countries. This logistical support is crucial in keeping front-line ministries supplied with what they need to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

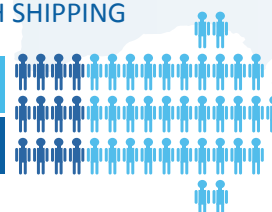
TOTAL VOLUME SHIPPED
11,585 ft³

19 ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED



MISSIONARIES SUPPORTED WITH SHIPPING

Number of Missionaries	47
New Missionaries in 2023	12



TOTAL DECLARED VALUE
\$446,033



Community Development Projects

Staying where you've been called can be tough when nothing productive seems to be happening. FIA has been serving an indigenous community in Nicaragua for the past 20 years, focusing on a major community development project to build relationships in order to share the Gospel message. With the people having to cross language, cultural, and religious barriers to understanding, this has been a (sometimes painfully) slow task—but the Lord has been faithful to us even as we have worked to remain faithful to serve Him where He called us.

The greatest challenge in the early days was seeing great progress made at the project level (community development) while little seemed to be changing in the area that we truly cared about (transformation of the heart). The FIA commitment has been to assist the Rama in establishing a new community building, 40 hurricane-resistant homes, a community center, a school, and a health clinic, as well as providing clean water for the community. Though a transformative project for the community, the goal was always to see people come to Christ, and for the first eight years, we didn't see the change that we were praying for.

Tim Johnston, the project and field leader for the Nicaragua work, remembers questioning the Lord: "Nothing was happening [in the spiritual sense], and I was praying that God would show us if the time had come to move on to another Rama community." And then one day, several leaders came to Tim and asked, "Can you help us answer questions from God's word?" The doors flew open. God's timing, God's way.

It took eight years for that first spiritual breakthrough to occur. Since then, through the blessing of hundreds

of donors, prayer warriors, and volunteers each year serving the Rama people in Nicaragua, as FIA continues to build into the community, the Lord continues to build His Church. There are now 60+ confirmed Christ followers in this Rama community. Praise God for how His plans have come together to add the Rama to the people who will worship at the foot of the throne of Christ!

God's answer: Stay the course. It may take time to transform hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

As of December 2023, through the financial support of many faithful donors and supporters, FIA has funded or completed the construction of 29 homes, a laundry/shower facility, a mechanical and woodcraft workshop, a boat dock and launch, and a baseball field in the new Rama community. A community kitchen/dining/meeting space is now under construction, to be completed by June 2025.

This is just one of the community development projects supported through the ministries of Friends In Action in 2023. FIA supports building and community development projects in Africa, Nicaragua, Mexico, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, and Bolivia.

These varied projects have included:

- 1 Missionary Housing
- 2 Construction
- 3 Church Construction
- 4 Infrastructure Development for National/Indigenous Training Centers
- 5 Building Cyclone-Resistant Housing
- 6 Developing Health & Hygiene Projects ■

Invested globally in construction and community development projects in 2023

\$217k+

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

—Ezekiel 36:26-28 (KJV)





Clean Water

Africa, the second driest continent in the world, is grappling with a severe water crisis. More than 800 children under the age of five die every day from diarrhea caused by contaminated water, poor sanitation, and unsafe hygiene practices. The burden of water collection falls on younger women and children, who walk several miles daily to obtain unsanitary water, risking their safety. A village well is not just a source of water but a beacon of health, safety, and hope for these communities. Wells also provide stability for local subsistence farmers and agricultural projects, allowing people to survive a changing climate and challenging environmental conditions and strengthening local community development opportunities.

FIA has had a steadfast presence in West Africa for the past 24 years, serving people and partners by providing clean drinking water by way of drilling deep water wells. This service supports the ongoing work of Gospel partners, pastors, and missionaries living as witnesses for Christ in unreached communities.

As the team completed one of the wells drilled in 2023, a local pastor expressed his gratitude to the FIA team for their transformative work. He and his community had waited 10 years for the provision of water. When our field leader, Jeremy Effler, humbly attributed the success to the Lord and His provision, the pastor had the open platform and opportunity to acknowledge, before his community and in the presence of many witnesses, "Yes, today we have seen the hands of God."

The opportunity to publicly recognize Christ's handiwork is remarkable in this predominantly Muslim country where less than 0.2% profess Christ as their Savior (JoshuaProject.org). Yet it

is a story repeated as the wells make a physical and meaningful impact in the lives of those being served. In a country where trust is not easily given, Kingdom work advances through believers who earn their place in society by building bridges of peace and relationships with others in their community. Just as water nourishes the growth of a newly planted field, FIA serves to nourish and support the fledgling national church in this yet-unevangelized country.

As we face forward, clean water projects remain our primary focus in West Africa, and we seek God-given opportunities to advance the work of the Kingdom. Each year, we trust His provision to drill at least ten wells (roughly \$100,000 each year) to travel to increasingly remote regions to support new partners serving there.

Supporting national and international partners in the countries in West Africa, Mexico, Vanuatu, Bolivia, and Nicaragua, FIA engages in clean water initiatives and projects with the goal of introducing unreached and unevangelized peoples to the Living Water.

Services include:

- 1 Well Drilling & Creative Water Solutions
- 2 Developing Water Collection, Distribution & Purification Systems
- 3 Providing Constructing Services to Implement these Systems

Through these projects supporting the witness of faithful men and women living for Christ in adverse conditions, FIA shares in the privilege of seeing the Living Water soften hearts of stone into hearts of flesh as they take steps into new life with Christ. ■

Invested globally in clean water initiatives and water projects in 2023

\$218k+



“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise..”

– Isaiah 43:19-21 (KJV)



Outreach & Relief Services

Hurricane-force winds make short work of village roofs in the Amazon jungle, whether made of thatch or straw. Massive storm damage and flooding in South Pacific islander communities resulted in the loss of subsistence crops and garden produce. Desertification and limited rainfall results in drought, famine, sickness, and disease. Political and economic instabilities wreak havoc just as quickly as natural disasters, especially for people without anyone to advocate for them.

Outreach and Relief Services takes on a different “approach” in each of the various countries of FIA engagement. International Gospel workers see these services as God-given responsibilities (compassionate care for those in need during times of crisis and disaster) as well as intentional and strategic opportunities for Kingdom growth and expansion. Each FIA mission field has the scope of service to use ministry funds in times of crisis to meet areas of critical need for the national people. Our actions bear witness to a compassionate God, and the fact that FIA and mission partners care enough to walk alongside those in crisis and challenge opens the door to a deeper explanation of *why*. This is the basis for compassionate ministry. Outreach and relief services are one of the means the Lord provides for Gospel-sowing and for church ministry work to move forward.

Mission partners in Bolivia have developed a strategic approach to engaging the national and Indigenous communities affected by tropical storms and hurricane winds invading the Amazon Basin. Bolivian missionary Iver Suarez leads groups of 4-8 people (often Christian volunteers from local Bolivian churches) on 6- to 14-day ministry trips into the Amazon jungle with provisions of food, clothing, and basic medicines to serve communities hard-hit by these storms. These repeated visits have

created great opportunities to share the Gospel: “It is a very hard season for people affected by the winds. Many are left homeless, but we have been able to pray with them. We bring doctors and many clothes, needed social and spiritual assistance for people living in extreme poverty. I am passionate about missions,” Iver said. “This month we have been going to many communities, sharing God’s Word.” Avaroa is a new community added to the support circuit. Pastor Rafael Rivera, one of the leaders of the mission supported by FIA ministry funds, was part of the ministry team visiting Avaroa to preach the Gospel and give help with clothing for the people. In his words, “providing for physical needs opens many doors for the Gospel.”


Though the Bolivian church is resource-limited to begin with, they give out of what little they have to provide for those in need; and the Lord multiplies. Friends In Action International considers it an honor to work alongside faithful brothers and sisters in Bolivia, Vanuatu, West Africa, and around the world to provide financial and practical resources to help those who need it most.

Outreach/relief services may also include emergency medical support and financial support in crisis or emergency situations, offered in times of crisis.

The response in these circumstances is made possible by funds donated to specific projects/ fields for benevolent and outreach purposes and may include funds donated to Where Needed Most to be used in special circumstances as approved by FIA leadership and the Board of Directors. ■

Provided in outreach support and through relief services and crisis intervention in 2023

\$32.5k+

A photograph of two women in an outdoor setting. The woman on the left, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, a black cap, and a pink backpack, is handing out small white packets to the woman on the right. The woman on the right is wearing a blue short-sleeved shirt and a blue and white patterned skirt. They are standing in front of a wooden structure with a thatched roof. In the background, there are trees and a red plastic chair. A red plastic crate filled with various items is visible in the bottom right corner.

“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him... Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily....”

– Isaiah 58:7-8 (KJV)



Life Skills Training & Education

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

— 2 Timothy 1:13-14 (KJV)

Mission partners James and Morgan Tumwessigye serve with Milandila Community Mission (Milandila.org) in the rural Ugandan community of Lusanja (some distance from the capital city of Kampala). This rural, remote, and underdeveloped community has few resources, limited infrastructure, and virtually no Gospel presence aside from James and Morgan beginning to engage with the people.

The vision for the Milandila mission is to develop a local vocational and agricultural training facility to create a bridge between community life and local relationships. The long-term vision is intentional relationships as the means leading to discipleship and salvation. The first step is forging the bond and bridging culture and community.

Friends In Action International first partnered with Milandila in 2023, sending a multi-trade team to Uganda to assist with completing the Tumwessigye's village mission home. While James and Morgan were eager to develop relationships, they were limited by living over an hour away from Lusanja. A daily commute and not being "part of the community" made the relationship-building process slow. The house-build threw open that door of relationship with the people of Lusanja; it was a practical demonstration of James and Morgan's commitment to live

with and serve the people there. What the FIA team accomplished in two weeks practically accelerated the Milandila Mission timeline by months, if not more. And of even greater value to James, with his focus on discipleship and evangelism, was the ministry opportunities created through the volunteers on that trip to introduce the local, national men working alongside the team to Jesus. James shared these words about the experience:

"It's been so good to see these young men holding a saw for the first time and smile to see how fast this machine works. The [team] has done an amazing job every morning, sharing devotion and sharing what God has been doing in their lives, what God has put on their hearts...My hope and prayer was that what they share would spark questions



Invested in life-skills vocational training, educational opportunities, and biblical training & mentorship in 2023

\$31k+



so that the Holy Spirit starts working in [the lives of the national guys listening]. As the men shared their stories about Jesus and what Jesus had done for them, these young guys started asking questions. They have hard questions that show me the Holy Spirit is speaking into their lives. I'm so excited to see where this journey goes with these young men."

Whether it is by working alongside a group of national workers on a two-week service trip or the longer-term investment in trade-based skills training, developing vocational and academic training opportunities, teaching life skills and trade skills, and supporting ongoing education, Friends In Action International intentionally focuses on people, recognizing this is a catalyst opportunity for our mission partners to grow Gospel-centered relationships with the people they serve

FIA supports ongoing skills training, educational opportunities, and spiritual development (Bible conferences and ongoing theological training) in the countries and regions of Papua New Guinea, Bolivia, Vanuatu, Nicaragua, and West Africa, as well as the efforts of ministry partners such as Milandila Mission. ■

Friends In Action International intentionally focuses on people, recognizing this is a catalyst opportunity for our mission partners to grow Gospel-centered relationships with the people they serve.





Short-Term Service Projects & Initiatives

FIA's mission is to serve and support the work of Gospel-focused Christ-followers around the world. Our short-term team trips are a powerful means to make a significant impact in a brief time, with focused objectives and skilled, productive labor. We overcome major challenges and seemingly insurmountable tasks, whether by sending a single team or strategically breaking down a project and accomplishing the objective with several teams. This allows our partners to focus on their calling to share the Gospel with the Lost. Short-term service projects allow FIA to connect willing, experienced, and qualified volunteers with these areas of challenge where they can apply their talents to help the missionary in their time of need.

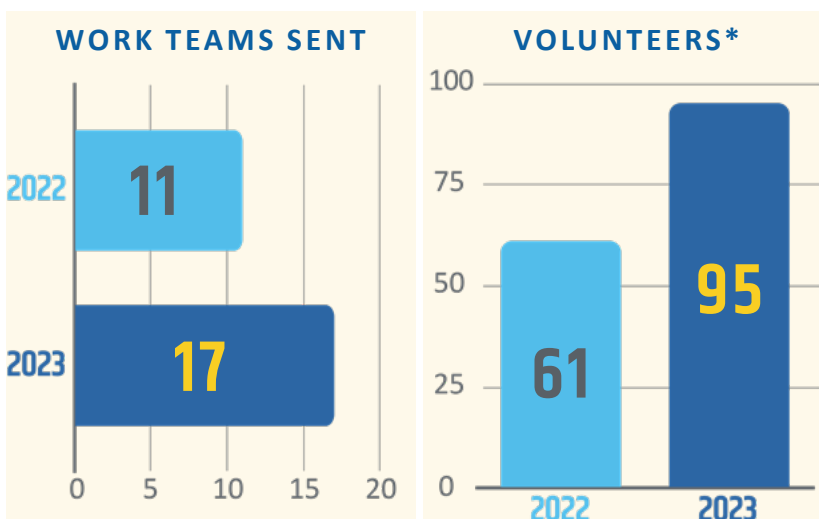
Since 1992, FIA has sent more than 1,200 volunteers on service projects in Canada, the U.S., and the mission world. In every circumstance, our teams focus on living out the Gospel truth in relationship with each other, with those we serve, and in the communities around us as we always point back to Jesus, the One who holds all things together! Three powerful testimonies reveal how we live out the Gospel for the glory of God:

"I love that nine people came together and served and cared for each other. We felt like family until the two or even one week were over. The time of morning devotions, the conversations around the table, and the conversation as we worked alongside each other built friendships that will last forever. We heard about the experiences each of us has walked through, the tough situations some of the team members are currently in, and all of us looking to our Lord and Savior to continue to lead and guide us. What encouragement! We were told multiple times by Wyatt, Jared, and others on staff how much they appreciated the skill set of our team and how much the team accomplished. I know what was done would have been very costly to pay laborers to do the work. We have an awesome God!"

—Building Renovation Volunteer
Ethnos 360 Training Center

"My husband and I have been deeply blessed to get to know FIA over the past few years. We volunteered for three weeks to help install plumbing and electrical systems at the base in Vanuatu, in the South Pacific. We observed first-hand true caring and many acts of kindness to increase the well-being of those in need. It was uplifting to begin each day with group devotions. Decisions made were fiscally sound. We will continue to support this ministry in numerous ways. God is at work through FIA!"

—General Laborer
FIA construction team
supporting FIA Vanuatu
ministries



*Short-term service & support projects

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

—Galatians 6:10 (KJV)

“Recently, I was part of a welding team working in West Africa. Our scope of work was to finish an equipment hanger so the water-well drilling equipment could be kept out of the sun and rain while working on maintaining the equipment and support vehicles. This project was a perfect example of how a tangible project, such as welding and fabrication, can be used to support missionaries and their efforts to speed the Gospel to those who have never heard. If the equipment cannot be maintained or protected, how will the wells get drilled, leading to the opportunity to share the Living Water of Jesus Christ?”

—Volunteer Welder
FIA West Africa ministry
center development ■



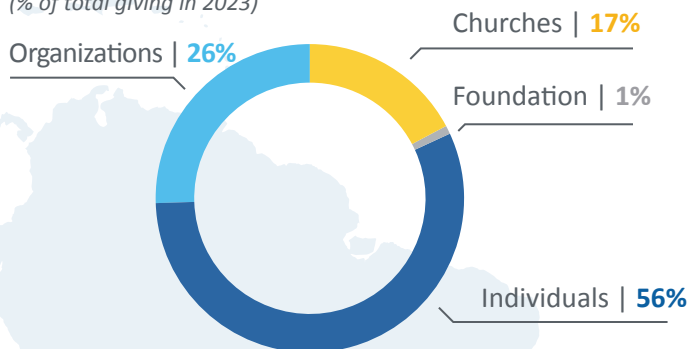
Financial Report*

	2021	2022	2023*
FUNDING SOURCES <i>(based on end-of-year financials)</i>			
Mission & Project Support	\$1,169,780.96	\$1,186,047.00	\$1,226,422.55
Missionary & Staff Support	\$665,175.00	\$689,275.00	\$671,262.29
Administrative & Member Fees	\$115,896.83	\$119,063.00	\$149,737.51
Other (Rental/Lease Income)	\$119,345.40	\$203,448.00	\$62,058.60
TOTAL ORG INCOME	\$2,070,198.19	\$2,197,833.00	\$2,109,480.95

EXPENSES	<i>(confirmed from 990)</i>	<i>(estimates prior to audit)</i>
Program Expenses	\$1,172,661.00	\$1,826,003.00
Management & Admin Expenses	\$133,959.00	\$141,196.00
Fund & Partnership Development	\$64,715.00	\$115,799.00
TOTAL ORG EXPENSES	\$1,371,335.00	\$2,082,998.00

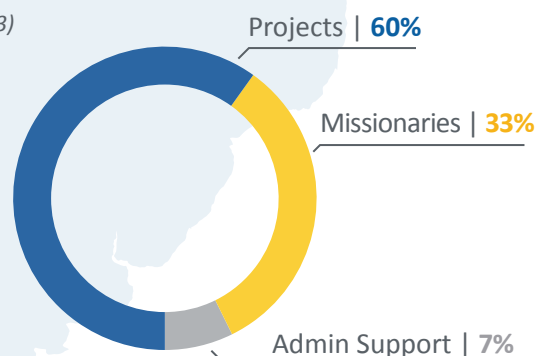
Who Is Supporting The Work of FIA Intl.?

(% of total giving in 2023)



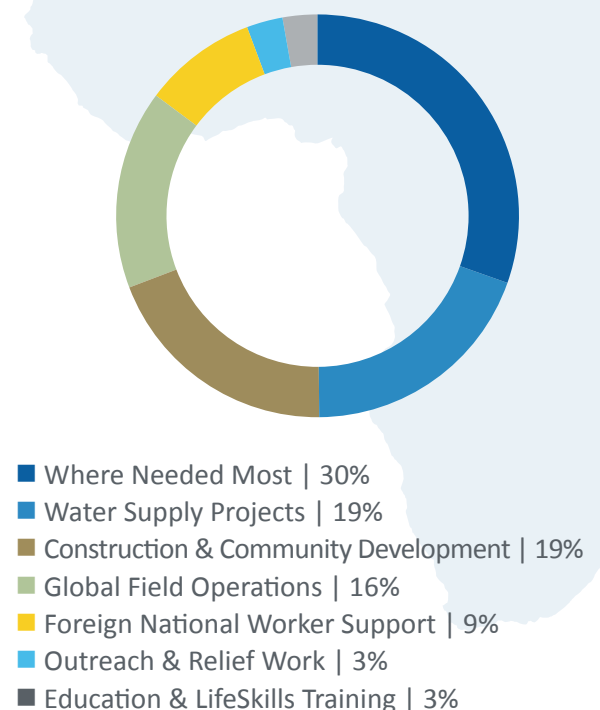
What Is Being Supported?

(giving in 2023)



Program Support

(percentage by giving in 2023)



*Disclaimer: 2023 financial estimates prior to audit were used.

Complete and audited financial statements are available at FIAintl.org/about/accountability

Financial Accountability

Our focused diligence has enabled us to receive Charity Navigator's coveted 4-star rating, good standing with all seven standards of financial stewardship with the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), the top-rated badge from Great Non-Profits.org, and GuideStar's platinum transparency rating.

SCAN TO
LEARN
MORE ►



Certifying Organizations



Charity Navigator

FIA has earned Charity Navigator's 4-star accountability/transparency rating.



Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

FIA is considered an accredited organization in good standing with all seven standards of ECFA's Financial Stewardship.



Great NonProfits

FIA received the prestigious Top-Rated Badge, the one and only people's choice award where volunteers, donors, and people served by FIA share their opinion of our work.



GuideStar

FIA received a Platinum rating, Guide Star's highest level of transparency offered to non-profits.



FIA INTL. LEADERSHIP

Matt Durkee • Executive Director

Andy Bachert • Chief Operating Officer

Tim Johnston • Director of Partnership Development

USA BOARD MEMBERS

Andy Hunt • Board Chairman/Treasurer

Paul Jarot • Board Vice Chair

Ted Illjes • Board Secretary

Faye Brown • Board Member

Steve Nehlsen • Board Member

Ralph Beltran • Board Member (Emeritus)

Randy Schnieders • Board Member

Matt Durkee • Executive Director

CANADA BOARD MEMBERS

Roger Wingfield • Board Chairman/Treasurer

Irwin Pronk • Board Vice Chair

Chris Smerdon • Board Secretary

Matt Durkee • Executive Director



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