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Building Companions Compagnons Bâtisseurs Epiṭō Baràtok Bouworde Companheiros Constructores Soci Costruttori Compañeros Constructores Bauorden
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IBO Italy

An extract from the Social Responsibility Report 2011

Who We Are

IBO Italia is a Non-Governmental Organization of Christian inspiration operating in the field of national and international volunteer work. The network of which it is a member began its operations in 1953 in northern Europe, with the first work camps serving to rebuild destroyed houses for World War II refugees. In fact, IBO is the Flemish acronym for Internationale Bouworde, which translates as "International Builder Society".

Located in Italy since 1957, IBO was officially established as an association in 1968 and was named suitable for work in the field of international cooperation by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1972 (IBO was the first NGO in Italy to officially carry out an international-cooperation project approved by the MFA). Member of CCIVS - Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service - since 1957 under the aegis of UNESCO, IBO has been registered in the Provincial Charity Registry since 2005 and it is part of the Italian NGO Federation Volontari nel mondo (Volunteers in the World) - FOCSIV since 1972.

Vision

A society in which everyone takes responsibility for the wellbeing of others and of the community at large. A world in which education is available to everyone, so every person is free to choose where and how to live, in his or her country of origin or elsewhere.

Mission

IBO Italia aims to create the conditions necessary for access to education and training in developing countries and to develop a social consciousness in young people through shared experiences and concrete work performed gratis for people in need.

Values

- Volunteer work as a means of social involvement;
- Teamwork and solidarity;
- The importance and richness of cultural diversity;
- Labor as an instrument of advancement and independence;
- Respect for mankind and for the environment through the encouragement of justice, peace and equity;
- Consistency in one's everyday choices

Activity

IBO Italia works in the fields of International Cooperation (projects involving Cooperation, Child Sponsorship) and Responsible Solidarity (Work and Solidarity Camps, European Voluntary Service, Civil Service, Youth Exchanges, Development Education).

Objectives

The activities of International Cooperation are intended to:

- sensitize families to the importance of education for their children;
- create facilities to satisfy primary needs as well as facilitating school attendance;
- provide training and support to teachers;
- promote local employment using training courses and job placement.

The activities of Responsible Solidarity are intended to:

- provide and encourage opportunities to participate in volunteer experiences of medium to long term;
- raise awareness and involve citizens in the fight against poverty and economic and social imbalances;
- constitute a network of local volunteer groups.

Our history

IBO Italia was born in Italy in 1957, thanks to Father Angelo Marcandella, a young priest of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart and the son of Italian immigrants in Belgium.

Father Angelo had followed the movement "International Builder Membership" since its creation in 1953 in Europe by another priest, Father Werenfried van Straaten, better known as "Bacon Priest." The Bacon Priest, who some years before founded the "Oostpriesterhulp" or "Church of the Silence" (today known as "Aid to the Church in Need") acquired this nickname for his engagement with poor German refugees of the Second World War who, after having escaped from the blasted cities at the end of the war, crowded together on the borders with Belgium and Holland. In his collecting campaigns, Father Bacon took everything that Flemish housewives could spare; above all bacon (which earn him the lifelong nickname of the "Bacon Priest") which he then gave to the evacuee families.

One Sunday morning, during the Mass, he gave some small holy pictures to the children and told them to hang them on the walls of their houses. Whereupon he saw a little girl crying and he asked her why she was so sad. The little girl replied that hers was one of five families living in a warehouse. Her family was in the center and so there were not any walls. Disconcerted, he founded "International Builder Memberships" to build houses for them, with the help of many young people who came from all over Europe to support him. Working teams of "white overalls", thanks to the donation of thousands of white overalls from a German paint company, flooded Europe, including Italy. Their aim was to build houses for who could not afford to buy them.

The first office of IBO Italia was in Cognola di Trento, then Pontenure (PC), Piacenza, Cesate (MI), Casalpusterlengo (LO), Cassana (FE) and today the national headquarters resides in the center of Ferrara.

Over time IBO Italia has undergone various transformations. It became an official association (1968) and then a Non-Governmental Organization (1972), when the first cooperation project in Zaire was carried out for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1974 IBO Italia was one of the founding NGOs of Volontari nel Mondo - FOCSIV (Federation of Christian Organizations for International Volunteer Service), at that time still known as FOLM (Federation of Lay Missionary Organizations).

To this day, IBO Italia conducts many projects in Latin America, Africa, Asia, in addition to thousands of work camps throughout Europe, with the participation of tens of thousands of volunteers.

Governance and Operating Structure

The various decision - making bodies in IBO Italia are: the members' assembly, the board of directors, the audit committee and working committees.

The assembly meets once a year to approve both the final balance sheet for that year and the operating budget for the next year, and to deliberate on the planning of activities of the association, the internal regulations and the creation of local groups. Every 3 years the assembly nominates the 9 members of the board of directors, which has the duty to determine the strategies of the organization and oversee its operations. The president and vice president are elected among the board members by majority vote.

The assembly annually confirms the decisions made by the board, which meets more frequently. The audit committee is composed of 3 members and checks the budgets. The conjunction between political and operating structure is embodied in the working committees, which analyze the progress in the various sectors and create strategies to be submitted to the board. The members and the board perform the political role, while the professional structure performs the technical one.

As far as concern the area of international development cooperation, the on going projects are the following ones:

Peru – 2 Shores Project

Location: Ancash region, Huaraz province

The project began at the beginning of May 2011. During the first year the following activities were realized:

- 3 training modules in social entrepreneurship and education in credit and savings;
- 2 courses in sculpting and engraving stone.

In addition the foundations of a new stoneworking laboratory were poured.

Ecuador – Cooper-Attiva

Location: Cotopaxi, El Oro and Loja Regions

The project began in October of 2011. In the first year project the following steps were completed:

- purchase of various technical machines for woodprocessing;

- food distribution and the construction of houses for the poorest families in the villages involved in the project.

India – Shu&Dhaga – Needle and Thread

Location: Bandra – Mumbai

During the last two years the group of women employed in the project Sui&Dhaga has further grown. A new order for the Italian Fair Trade firm AltraQualità was created, using newly-developed models. In addition, the project launched efforts to improve the communication of the group and to amplify retail channels in the local market.

India - Slum Women's Empowerment

Location: Bandra – Mumbai

In 2011 and 2012 the project financed by the Italian Bishops Conference realized the following activities for women coming from the slums: literacy courses; monthly meetings on sanitation, workshops and awareness campaigns about hygiene; reinforcement of the ongoing income-generating activities

Romania - Pinocchio Education and Daily Center

Location: Panciu, Vrancea Region

The activities realized over the course of 2 can be subdivided in 3 areas of action:

- Literacy and after-school activities for 35 children, scholastic mediation and monitoring of attendance for the children enrolled at the Center; creative and intercultural laboratories; medical visits
- Volunteerism: integration of 2 EVS volunteers and 4 from the Civil Service, promotion of volunteerism among young Romanians at the high schools and via the National Agency of Youth and Sports. Organization of National Volunteer Week.
- Expansion and modernization of the Pinocchio Center: completion of the external structure, the roof, the internal dividing walls, preparation of the electric, sanitary and heating systems.

Ukraine – Preventing the Trafficking of Minors

In the third year of the project we focused on the continuity of the training of street operators and those who perform social services for minors, reinforcing the results from the previous year. Specifically, the following activities were carried out:

- 4 Ukrainian and 2 Moldavian social workers participated in training internships in Italy at various social/educational entities in Emilia Romagna
- one international training seminar, including a study visit for the Moldavian agents in Ukraine.

Description of the proposed project

The project, “A new home for 20 Andean poor families in Ecuador,” is part of a broader initiative aimed at strengthening the network of wood processing cooperatives called the “Don Bosco Arts Center,” which is present in six rural districts in the Ecuadorian provinces, Cotopaxi, Loja, Bolivar, and El Oro.

CONTEXT

The 2005 World Bank report estimates that the population rate in Ecuador living below the poverty line is between 40% and 70%. In rural areas, this percentage increases noticeably, especially for the indigenous people (40% of the total population); the population rate living in extreme poverty has reached 85.9%.

Along with unemployment, poverty remains one of the main problems for the country, especially for the youth (11.5% of the total population). The lack of work is the cause for numerous problems for both the individual and society: emigration and the break up of households, high rates of school drop-out children and an increase of delinquency. In addition, there are many situations of exclusion and inequality, which are dependent on the level of poverty, the place of residence, and ethnic origins: being poor and indigenous and living in rural areas are factors that limit access to opportunities. One group of society that is most affected by these problems are the youths aged 15 to 29 years old, who are the target group of the project.

Moreover, the growing inequality in incomes, salaries, and the distribution of resources has worsened the situation, causing increasing emigration from the rural areas to the city or to other countries.

According to the indications of the EU strategy in 2007-2013 for Ecuador, generating sustainable economic opportunities would reduce unemployment and underpaid work, increase family incomes, and help emigrants return to the country.

PROJECT INITIATIVE

The project, “Cooperating actively in the Andes,” fits into this context through the project collaboration of IBO Italy and OMG Ecuador. OMG Ecuador is a local association, started in the wake of a voluntary movement and founded in 1967 by Father Ugo de Censi who supports working with the youth to fight poverty and advocates rural development through education and social inclusion.

The movement has been active in Ecuador since the early years of the seventies; it has expanded in those years to Pujili, Zumbahua, Chugchilan, Isinlivi, Angamarca, Cuatro Esquinas, San Mateo, San Lorenzo, Tenta, Paraíso de Celen, Guanazan.

The association, OMG Ecuador, has inspired Don Bosco to combine education with real working possibilities, creating an educational route that aims to accompany youth on their path through life, from entering school to looking for a job. This will require professional advancement and being responsible for work, family, and the community. In its missions in Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru, OMG has started professional training for girls and boys that come from disadvantaged families. At the end of training, the boys and girls have acquired an education on responsibility and professional training that allow them to be able to be part of a stable and legal working environment. Those who believe in the rural development of their country can participate in a network for both females and males where they can take part in weaving, artistic sewing, and hand-carving furniture. They will make products that once sold will produce profits by reinvesting in the same networks.

The selling of these products is carried out individually by the same cooperatives as well as by the Don Bosco Central Exhibition in Quito, which is well-known nationally and whose staff focuses on providing for its clients, giving visibility to the work of the boys and girls. This is made possible by the existence of a new Ecuadorian middle class which cares about the development of its country, as well as about high quality furniture and products made entirely by hand.

LOCATIONS OF THE PROJECT

<i>Province</i>	<i>Canton</i>	<i>Rural Village</i>
Cotopaxi	Pujili, Sigchos	Angamarca, Chinalo, Zumbahua, Isinlivi
Bolivar	Guaranda	Cuatro Esquinas

El Oro	Zaruma	Guanazan
Loja	Saraguro	Celen

OBJECTIVE

The project is designed to improve the socio-economic level of some of the poorer and isolated Andean communities in Ecuador through the expansion of community life, the integration of youth in their place of origin, and the strengthening and enhancement of cultural aspects through participation, volunteering, and improvement of living conditions. Strengthening professional training and creating work opportunities extend the benefits of the project to the local community as a whole. This objective is integrated within the Ecuadorian government's "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo" that strives to accomplish goals of "Equality, cohesion, and social integration," supporting the first objective of the Millennium to reduce poverty, guaranteeing full, productive jobs and decent work for everyone.

BENEFICIARIES

The direct beneficiaries of this project are 300 Andean youths from 16 to 29 years old in the communities of Angamarca, Celen, Chinalo, Cuatro Esquinas, Guanazan, Isinlivi and Zumbahua. The indirect beneficiaries are all of the six communities involved (approx. 51,000 people).

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Creating a cooperative for the production of furniture and sculptures in the rural village of Angamarca and adding to the network "Don Bosco Art Center";
- Strengthening the network through the activation of professional training courses and technical development for 7 cooperatives in the rural villages of Angamarca, Chinalo, Celen, Cuatro Esquinas, Guanazan, Isinlivi, and Zumbahua;
- Setting up a multimedia library;
- Adding new materials to the market (woodcuts and bits of gold and glass);
- Creating a new credit fund for the youth for the delivery of at least 9 credits within three years;
- Participating in volunteer work, plays, and activities with the community.

APART FROM WORK

Volunteering for the poor

In addition to work, the people of the cooperatives carry out volunteering and solidarity acts for the poorest people in the community, people who often live within several hours of walking distance from the villages with nonexistent paths or ones impassible from the rain. The volunteers reach isolated locations and come in contact with the most disadvantaged families in the area. They help in three fundamental ways: the first is the delivery of bags of food, that come periodically and are important to balance one's nutrition. The second consists of the reconstruction of houses, which are often unsafe or with deficient structures. And the third consists of activities of catechesis, which is not catechism in the strict sense, but more aimed to foster social interaction and assistance to the poor.

The project "A new home for 20 Andean poor families in Ecuador" fits within these volunteering activities; in particular, it supports the reconstruction of houses for the poorest families. Typical homes are called "choze" and have been constructed with mud and thatched roofs. Families of 5-6 people usually only have one section of the choze, which is often very restricted. This section is where they live, cook, sleep, and often share the space with small herds of Guinean pigs. The lack of a latrine, the poor materials that do not protect from the rain and humidity, and the living environment often polluted by cooking fumes make these homes unhealthy and without basic sanitary - hygienic conditions. In these environments, diseases are easily spread, such as typhus, TBC, cholera, and other simple sicknesses that can become deadly. Birth often takes place in the house with the help of the midwives from the village; poor sanitary conditions have contributed to high infant and maternal mortality rates. The small nature of the houses and the high rate of alcoholism among men exacerbate problems of sexual promiscuity, sexual abuse within the family, and incestuous relationships.

The construction of more healthy and comfortable living spaces can reduce some of these problems. For this reason, the young people that work in the cooperatives will make a voluntary commitment to the construct or reconstruct houses for some of the poorest families. The homes will be 36 square meters with a small kitchen

with external ventilation and a small latrine that is emptied outside. In addition to wood and bricks, a local material, adobe, will be used that is created from a mixture of straw and dirt and has special thermal resistance.

The project will take 18 months from March 2013 to August 2014.

BUDGET

Item	Unit cost for a house	Number of houses	Total
Kitchen	40	20	800
Windows and door	60	20	1200
Latrine	80	20	1600
Roof	120	20	2400
Cost of transport	180	20	3600
Adobe bricks	250	20	5000
Boards	270	20	5400
Total			20000

Currency: US \$