**HEARTS OF GOLD FOUNDATION**

Empowering Communities From Within



**A Guide to the**

**Community Assistance Program**

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**HEARTS OF GOLD FOUNDATION**

Empowering Communities From Within

**What is Our Mission?**

Strengthen the capacity of community organizations through education, mentorship, and mobilization.

**What is Our Vision?**

An Ecuador where every individual enjoys a life of dignity, hope and empowerment.

**What Do We Do?**

Through its Community Assistance Program, Hearts of Gold partners with small nonprofit organizations and their community leaders in the Azuay province of Ecuador that serve marginalized populations. We *support, inspire, educate, and invest* in community leaders and grassroots organizations and their staff to make their work sustainable, efficient, and impactful.

***Why* Do We Do What Do We Do?**

Given that 75% of foundations in Ecuador close *within a three-year window*, Hearts of Gold is playing a pivotal role in supporting the sustenance of nonprofit work in Ecuador. The reality of nonprofit organizations in Ecuador is a lonely one. When a community leader is enduring a difficult time, there is no one to turn to for support, inspiration, or advice. Hearts of Gold wants to see grassroots organizations survive, and even more so thrive despite poor social conditions that make their work all the more challenging.

Our partners are working in Ecuadorian communities where 30% of students drop out between primary school and high school; where 26% of children under the age of 5 are malnourished; where severe child abuse was reported in 44% of homes; and where over 60% of women report to be victims of gender-based violence. Local grassroots organizations are working from the ground up to transform at-risk communities to overcome barriers of social inequalities, but without ongoing support and capacity building, these organizations are not likely to make it past three years of operation and provide sustainable solutions and critical services to communities in great need.

**How Does the Community Assistance Program (CAP) Work?**

The Community Assistance Program works to support grassroots organizations and their leaders to be more sustainable and impactful in the work they do. Our goal is to help these community leaders and their organizations to survive and thrive!

The CAP works through three primary program areas:

1. CAP Mentorship Program
   * We invest in organizations and their leaders through individualized counseling
2. Changemakers Training Program
   * We educate and inspire Ecuadorian nonprofits through skills-building workshops and dialogues
3. Network of Philanthropic Pioneers
   * We unite and mobilize like-minded individuals who are looking to get involved in a good cause
4. Community Initiatives
   * We support projects led by individuals looking to make a difference in their communities

**FOR NONPROFIT/COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

**What is the CAP Mentorship Program and Why Should My Organization Be A Member?**

Are you a non-profit or grassroots organization looking to grow or become more sustainable? Get involved in our Community Assistance Program by becoming an official member of the Mentorship Program. Hearts of Gold dedicates over 950 hours per year of individualized mentoring services to its 4 members in the Mentorship Program, each of whom is motivated to develop as organizations and leaders in their community. We vet each partner through an interview and evaluation process to ensure that the partnership is the right fit.

*We want to invest in your future. Are you ready?*

As a Member of the CAP you will have special access to:

* Receive specialized mentoring to strengthen the needs of the organization, its operation, and its leaders;
* Attend workshops and dialogues within the Changemakers Training Program to build skills, receive support, and network with community leaders;
* Utilize a fund to develop fundraising practices;
* Special visibility of your programs to the Hearts of Gold community; and
* Opportunities for networking to collaborate with other professionals and develop solutions.

**Life Cycle in the CAP Mentorship Program**

Hearts of Gold partners with 4-5 grassroots organizations each year in its CAP Mentorship Program. Given its limited number of spaces, the CAP Mentorship program is competitive and organizations must apply and be vetted through an application process.

**Applications**

Organizations interested in becoming a member of the CAP Mentorship Program must apply. Entry into the program is available in January (applications due the prior November 1) or July (applications due the prior May1). The application procedures include the following services:

* Application Review by Hearts staff member
* Interview with Hearts Program Coordinators
* On-site Assessment
* Membership Evaluation Tool (an evaluation of your strengths and weaknesses in 8 capacity focus areas)
* Individualized curriculum with recommended workshops and dialogues based on your strengths and weaknesses in 8 capacity areas

If there is no space available in the program your application will be kept on file to be evaluated for the next open space. In the meantime, we will review your evaluation and suggest a curriculum of workshops and dialogues based on your capacities, offer excellent rates for additional services in nonprofit operations, and the option to pay for consultations. We will also invite you to be a member of our nonprofit network and add you to our mailing list to receive the most up-to-date information.

**1-year Membership in the CAP Mentorship** **Program**

Based on your organization’s score using the MET, you will be placed into one of the following categories of the CAP Mentorship Program. Each category is designed to correlate with your organization’s level of capacity and how Hearts of Gold can best respond to your needs and help you grow in strategic areas of development:

Level 1

* Receive up to10 hours/month in specialized program support
* Receive up to10 hours/month in individualized mentoring and consultations
* Access to up to $500 fundraising capital *(separate application required with fundraising plan each time fund is dispersed)*

Level 2

* Receive up to 7 hours/month in specialized program support
* Receive up to 7 hours/month in individualized mentoring and consultations
* Access to up to $1,000 fundraising capital *(separate application required with fundraising plan each time fund is dispersed)*

Level 3

* Receive up to 5 hours/month in specialized program support
* Receive up to 5 hours/month in individualized mentoring and consultations
* Access to up to $1,500 fundraising capital *(separate application required with fundraising plan each time fund is dispersed)*

In addition to the benefits listed above, each member will receive…

* Free attendance to **5 skills-building workshop** and **3 dialogues** targeted at your areas in need of development including course materials and alimentation (attendance is required to maintain membership; receive discounts for extra trainings, extra participants, or personalized on-site courses)
* Entrance into the **Network of Philanthropic Pioneers** to build your nonprofit network and find your tribe
* Expose your programs to the Hearts of Gold community with passive **marketing** + a special feature on your organization once per year
* Quarterly **evaluations** to track your progress is targeting capacity areas and ensure that you are meeting your goals
* Regular **on-site visits** from Hearts of Gold staff
* **Discounted rates** on additional Hearts of Gold services to boost your nonprofit’s operation (such as hosted webpage and online donation system and donor management with individualized gratitude notes sent to your donors)

**Evaluation**

Hearts of Gold would like to ensure that your organization grows and becomes more sustainable through its membership in the CAP Mentorship Program. Thus, your organization will be evaluated 3 times per year in 8 capacity focus areas with 32 sub-categories. Based on your score (0.0-4.0) Hearts of Gold will place you in the 1, 2, or 3 level of the program, and design a specialized curriculum to target your capacity areas in need of development. The target capacity areas include the following:

* Organizational Infrastructure
* Finances
* Strategy
* Performance Management
* Marketing & Communications
* Revenue Generation & Fundraising
* Donor Stewardship & Management
* Volunteer Management

**Application to Access Fundraising Capital Fund**

An additional application is required each time you are interested in accessing your fundraising capital fund. The purpose of this application process is to ensure that the funds will be used responsibly and strategically to develop your organization’s fundraising practices and sustainable income. *The application requires that you:*

1. Submit budget for event or campaign
2. Submit fundraising campaign proposal with logistics
3. Sign agreement to….
   * Pay back whatever you borrow within 2 weeks after the campaign closes
   * Once paid back, you can reuse the money in their fund (with a new application)
   * If you pay back the fund 3x its original value, you can have a 50% increase in the fund available for your next event/campaign
   * If fund is not paid back, organization will lose its membership and privileges

**What is the Changemakers Training Program?**

The Changemakers Training Program is a chance for community leaders and nonprofit professionals to come together as participants at a series of skills-building workshops and dialogues in target capacity areas consisting of: Organizational Infrastructure, Finances, Strategy, Performance Management, Marketing & Communications, Revenue Generation & Fundraising, Donor Stewardship & Management, and Volunteer Management.

* Workshops offered every other month build skills and develop capacities that are critical for the success and sustainability of any organization
* Dialogue sessions offered every other month allow community leaders to connect and share experience from the field and discuss important topics for success in nonprofits

*As a participant of the Changemakers Training Program, you will have an opportunity to network, build your leadership skills and develop organizational capacity.*

**Why Network?**

* Meet others that are in the same situation as you, and learn from their successes, challenges, and lessons learned
* Collaborate with other organizations and individuals that have complementary skills
* Connect the work you do with others and work towards a similar goals

**Why Build Capacity?**

* Learn skills that can make your organization more efficient and sustainable
* Identify areas of weakness in your organization and how to approach them
* Refresh your knowledge of the field and nonprofit operation by revisiting core capacities that are critical for nonprofit operation and sustainability