

Healthy Mutual Aid & Non-Profit Organizations

Leland Ulrich, CEO

In this article, we bring **Mutual Aid Organizations** and **Non-Profit Organizations** into the framework of the Seven Pillars of Sustainable Kingdom Communities. Though their contexts differ, both share the same heartbeat: identifying needs, connecting resources, and stewarding them faithfully for the glory of God.

Mutual Aid Organizations focus primarily inward, caring for brothers and sisters within the household of faith, ensuring that no one suffers lack. Non-Profit Organizations often look outward, addressing the broader needs of society, extending Kingdom witness into the public square, and serving the vulnerable beyond the immediate church family. Both can be reactive—providing relief in moments of crisis—or proactive—building preventive solutions and long-term structures of care. At their best, they embody Christ's words: *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"* (Gal. 6:2), and His charge to be salt and light in the world (Matt. 5:13–16).

1. Vision

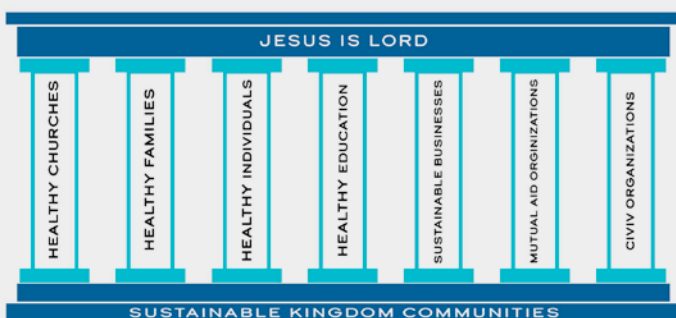
Vision is what gives these organizations their compass by stating a clear future-declared outcome. Without vision, efforts scatter and lose meaning. With vision, people unite around something greater than themselves. For mutual aid, the vision reflects the Acts 4 church, where *"neither was there any among them that lacked"* (Acts 4:34–35). The dream is of a community so knit together in Christ that every need is seen and met with love.

For non-profits, the vision often stretches outward, imagining broken systems restored, injustices overturned, and communities thriving in righteousness and peace. Isaiah 61 paints the picture of God's people raising up the ruins and repairing the devastations of generations. Whether inward or outward, vision points to the Kingdom breaking into the here and now.

2. Mission

If vision is the "Future Outcome Declared," then the mission is the "what you will do to get there." Mutual aid organizations often carry a mission like this: *to provide Christ-centered support in times of hardship by stewarding resources with dignity, accountability, and love.* Non-profits, by contrast, may describe

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their mission in terms of mobilizing volunteers, building programs, or advancing redemptive solutions in the public square.

Both echo the example of Jesus, who declared His mission with clarity: “*The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10). Mission focuses the work, keeping the organization from drifting and reminding everyone involved of what God has specifically entrusted to their hands.

3. Core Values

Core values function as the guardrails that keep the work aligned with Kingdom culture. They shape not just what we do, but how we do it. Values such as God’s love in action (1 John 3:18), dignity for all (Gen. 1:27), faithful stewardship (Luke 16:10–11), transparency and integrity (2 Cor. 8:21), and community solidarity (Rom. 12:10) form the backbone of trust.

When values are shared by leaders, staff, volunteers, and donors alike, they create a culture where people know they are not just part of an organization—they are participating in a Kingdom family on mission together.

4. Purpose

Purpose answers the question, “Why do we exist?” For mutual aid, the answer is to embody the love of Christ within the household of faith so that no member suffers alone, echoing Paul’s teaching that “*if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*” (1 Cor. 12:26). For non-profits, the purpose is to glorify God by serving people and addressing brokenness in the world with redemptive solutions, living out Paul’s call: “*Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*” (1 Cor. 10:31).

Purpose fuels perseverance. It steadies organizations in lean times and keeps their work rooted in eternal significance rather than temporary outcomes.

5. Organization

God is a God of order, not confusion (1 Cor. 14:40). Healthy organizational structures reflect this truth. Mutual aid groups need clarity of roles and processes so members know where to turn in times of need and leaders know how to respond with fairness and compassion. Non-profits require structure to manage staff, volunteers, and partnerships, ensuring accountability and focus without slipping into bureaucracy.

When leadership is carried out in humility and service, following Christ’s model that “*whoever would be great among you must be your servant*” (Mark 10:43–45), the organization itself becomes a living picture of God’s order and grace.

6. Operations

Operations are the everyday practices that bring vision and mission to life. For mutual aid, this may look like careful intake processes, wise distribution of resources, and clear communication with members. For non-profits, operations include program delivery, volunteer coordination, reporting, and preventive initiatives.

The heart of Kingdom operations is diligence with dignity. Proverbs 27:23 urges us to “*be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks.*” In practice, this means stewarding resources carefully, treating every request with respect, and ensuring that

help flows efficiently and fairly. Operations, when done with integrity, do more than manage tasks—they become ministry, where people encounter the love of Christ in practical form.

7. Finances

Finances are a sacred trust. Every gift, whether a dollar from a church member or a large grant from a donor, belongs to God (Ps. 24:1). Mutual aid organizations must handle contributions with transparency and fairness so that trust is never broken. Non-profits, with broader financial streams, must demonstrate rigorous stewardship and accountability.

The early church modeled this by sharing generously “*as every man had need.*” (Acts 2:45). Sound financial practices not only sustain the work but also testify to the faithfulness of God and the integrity of His people.

8. Governance

Finally, governance ensures accountability and long-term faithfulness. For mutual aid, this often looks like church oversight or councils ensuring fairness and alignment with biblical principles. For non-profits, boards or advisory councils provide oversight, direction, and prayerful discernment.

Acts 6 gives us the model: the apostles appointed trusted leaders to oversee the daily distribution so that the work would be done fairly and faithfully. Governance protects organizations from favoritism, secrecy, or drift, keeping Christ at the center and the mission on track.

The Triple Bottom Line

Healthy organizations measure success not just by output but by fruit:

1. **Kingdom Impact**—Is Christ glorified and His body strengthened?
2. **Social Impact**—Are lives and communities lifted, healed, and unified?
3. **Financial Stewardship**—Are resources managed faithfully to sustain ministry for generations?

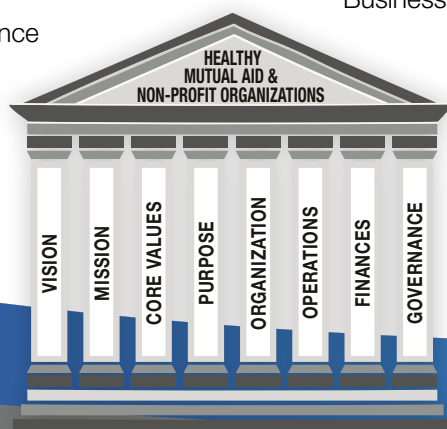
As Paul reminds us, “*For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*” (Rom. 14:17).

Closing Thought:

Mutual Aid and Non-Profit Organizations, though distinct in focus, are united in purpose. Mutual aid strengthens the household of faith, while non-profits extend compassion outward into the wider world. Together, they form the **hands of mercy and compassion** in Sustainable Kingdom Communities—identifying needs, mobilizing resources, and stewarding them for maximum Kingdom fruit.

Their true power emerges when they operate in relationship with the other six pillars: Healthy Churches, Healthy Families, Healthy Individuals, Healthy Education, Healthy Kingdom Businesses, and Healthy Civic Organizations.

Each pillar strengthens the others. When Mutual Aid and Non-Profit Organizations function in harmony with the whole framework, they ensure that the people of God are cared for internally and positioned as salt and light externally. In this way, their impact is not temporary relief alone, but lasting fruit that testifies of the Kingdom for generations to come.





GUATEMALA

Lemus Family–Guest House & Warehouse Project

Carlos Lemus - ASAL Coach, Guatemala



TESTIMONIAL
FROM THE FIELD

Historical Context:

After more than 13 years of living in the same community, we saw how this location—quiet, strategic, and close to the main roads connecting the entire country—could be an appropriate place to attract national and international tourists, and is suitable for families looking for a safe space close to both Guatemala City and Antigua, Guatemala. Thus, the dream of building a guesthouse that would not only serve our family, but could also become a sustainable source of income, was born.

At the same time, for more than a decade we operated a business producing natural beverages for sale to restaurants. However, our small space limited our ability to grow, store raw materials in bulk, and take advantage of more competitive prices. The opportunity arose when a neighbor, right next to the Airbnb property and our house, offered to sell us some land. It was the answer to years of prayer and the clear direction to invest in our own space to build a warehouse. This would not only meet our immediate needs but also help us with future expansions.

Both projects—Casa Kinwarik and the warehouse—were born as a step of faith and a vision for the future for our family, thanks to funding obtained from ASAL.

Family Impact:

From the beginning, we understood that these projects would not just be physical structures, but shared learning and work spaces. The Airbnb house allows us to assign clear roles to each family member in guest service, management, and maintenance. Although we're just getting started, this process has already strengthened our communication and mutual commitment.

The warehouse, for its part, will open the door to more jobs for the business's operations. Today, we all actively participate, learning together that shared sacrifice produces not only material satisfaction, but also spiritual satisfaction.

Community Impact

During the construction of the house and warehouse, several families in the community found employment. These projects provided a source of income for bricklayers, suppliers, and local workers.

Casa Kinwarik, although new, is intended as a contribution to domestic tourism, offering domestic and international travelers a relaxing space with a warm, family atmosphere. Our goal is for each guest to experience a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, just like the one we would want for ourselves when traveling.

The warehouse not only represents improved organization



and growth for our business, but also the opportunity to become distributors of raw materials, supporting other entrepreneurs and opening up the possibility of importing and exporting in the future.

Financial & Personal Impact

The road hasn't been easy. Purchasing the land, obtaining financing, and building from scratch were major challenges. However, each step confirmed that God provides when you work with faith and effort.

The Airbnb house is still in its early stages, but we're confident it will be a stable source of income to cover financial commitments and, over time, generate financial freedom.

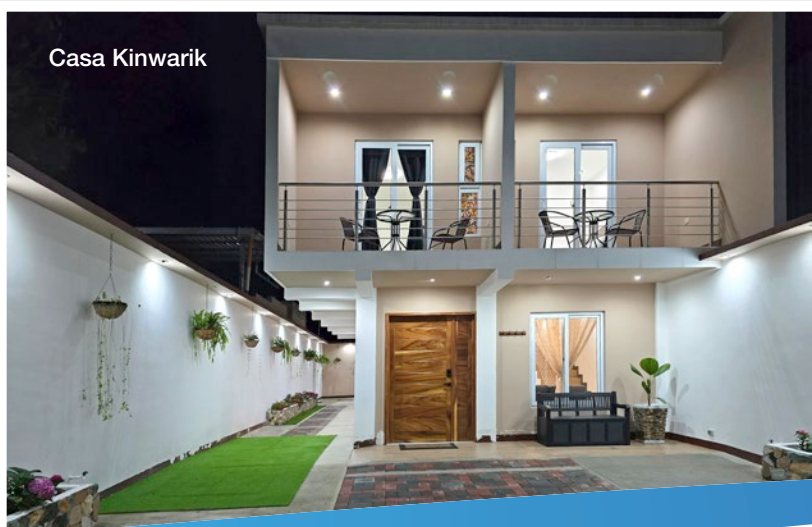
The warehouse, on the other hand, already allows us to purchase supplies in larger volumes, improve costs, and ensure the quality and consistency of our production. This financial growth is also an opportunity to bless others as we plan to use the additional income to support more families with decent employment and new opportunities.

Lessons & Vision for the Future

Both projects have taught us perseverance, patience, and gratitude. We've learned to place every step in God's hands, to recognize that the answers to our prayers are often right in front of us, and that family unity is key to recognizing them.

In five or ten years, we dream of expanding the Casa Kinwarik concept to other parts of the country, always offering an experience of genuine relaxation and authentic hospitality. As for the warehouse, we see it as a springboard to new markets.

Beyond the economic aspect, our vision is to leave a legacy—spaces where we can impact lives by honoring God and serving others. We hope our story inspires others to dream, believe, and act.





MANUAL LABOR VS. AUTOMATION

Stages of Sustainable Subsistence in Human History

Roman Miller, Communications Officer



In the late 1960s my parents migrated to Paraguay SA, where we experienced true frontier pioneering. We purchased 60 hectares of pure jungle. As a young child I experienced various stages of subsistence living.

Throughout human history, **subsistence** cultures have revolved around the cultivation of plants and the domestication of animals, providing the essential foundation for sustaining life. Subsistence refers to the means of support necessary for survival, such as food, shelter, and clothing. It can also describe a lifestyle where individuals produce just enough to meet their basic needs.

Humans, uniquely created in the image of God, have been blessed with mental capacities and natural giftings that have enabled them to advance and thrive despite the conditions of their natural environment. Unlike the rest of creation, humans have the ability to progress beyond basic survival. Through industry, labor, and the exercise of their God-given talents they have developed other ways of sustaining life. As the Scriptures make clear, this has also led to the temptation of making provisions for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, as man continually strives for improvement and greater efficiency.

As societies progress, they typically transition through various

stages: hunter-gatherer, pastoral, horticultural, agrarian, industrial, and post-industrial.

1. Hunter-Gatherer Societies rely on wild plants and animals and are generally nomadic.

2. Pastoral Societies depend on domesticated livestock. While some are nomadic, these communities often produce surplus food, enabling higher population densities and more complex divisions of labor.

3. Horticultural Societies cultivate crops using hand tools.

4. Agrarian Societies combine animal/motor power and machinery for crop production.

5. Industrial Societies center around mechanized manufacturing processes.

6. Post-Industrial Societies primarily focus on service-oriented work.

Each development of human existence has brought a shift that significantly affects various social aspects, such as **increasing specialization, greater technology use, and heightened inequality**. In early stages when most individuals

participate equally in necessary tasks, there is a greater tendency towards shared equality. As societies develop and become more efficient, they adopt more advanced technologies and processes. This often creates a greater disparity between various members of that society, especially in the areas of ownership and income.

It becomes important to consider these issues as we consider kingdom business in our day. We can not evade the fact that we live in a fast-paced society, where some of the most basic functions of human existence have become automated. It becomes evident that certain levels of automation produce distinct advantages for production and processes that support human existence—such as increased volume, quality, efficiency, profitability, improved wages, etc.

Have you considered the delicate balance between automation and manual labor in your strategic plan? We must carefully evaluate these two elements. Typically, they are expected to be at odds with each other. However, that doesn't need to be the case. Kingdom business allows us to focus on the values that are important, such as equality, brotherhood, and ethics. At the same time it is possible to utilize both the elements of manual labor vs. automation to create a combination that is effective and competitive in today's markets.





THE HIDDEN DYSFUNCTION

That Erodes Respect, Stalls Progress, & Destroys Culture

Every organization talks about accountability. It shows up in mission statements, performance reviews, and all-hands meetings. But one dysfunction quietly undermines it all—and it's harder to spot than most leaders realize.

The Answer: High Accountability/Low Consequence

It looks like rigor: people make commitments, deadlines are set, charts fill the walls. But when consequences don't follow, the system collapses. Commitments lose weight. Respect erodes. Progress stalls. Culture weakens.

Real accountability only thrives when three elements work together:

Commitment. Specific promises—what will be done, by whom, by when, and to what standard.

Visibility. Public commitments, shared openly, so progress is clear, and successes can be celebrated.

Consequence. Not punishment, but consistent follow-through—support, coaching, or course correction that signals commitments matter.

When one piece is missing, accountability turns into theater. But when all three align, accountability becomes a powerful engine of trust, clarity, and performance.

3 REMINDERS For New Business Owners

Willard Mast, Director of International Operations (DIO)

| *Don't Compare*

Avoid comparing your beginnings to others' advanced stages. Overnight successes are a myth.

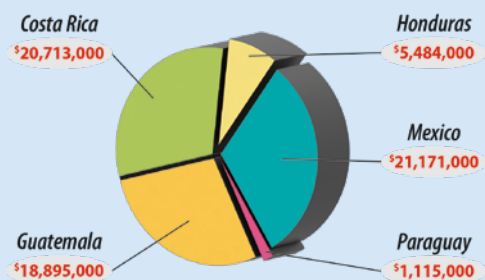
| *Don't Isolate*

Entrepreneurship can be lonely. Don't try this by yourself. Seek out a community and a coach.

| *Set Goals*

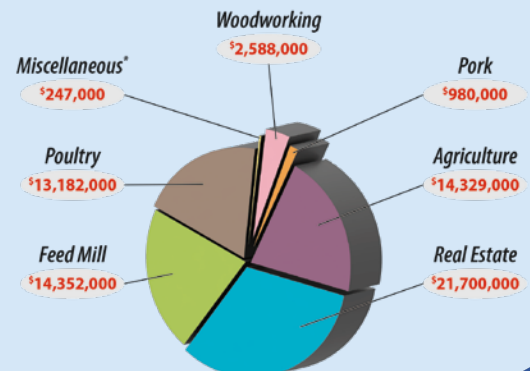
Deconstruct your goals. Plan to take small steps. Complete each goal. Repeat.

LOAN PORTFOLIO BY COUNTRY



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LOAN PORTFOLIO BY INDUSTRY





VISION

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